

JULY, 1936



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COMMUNIST

Review of the Month

A. B.

•
Platforms and Issues in 1936

DAVID RAMSEY

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The Struggle for Puerto Rican Independence

HARRY ROBINSON

•
Problems of Party Growth in New York

MAX STEINBERG

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On the Communist Approach to Zionism

The People's Front Strikes from the Shoulder
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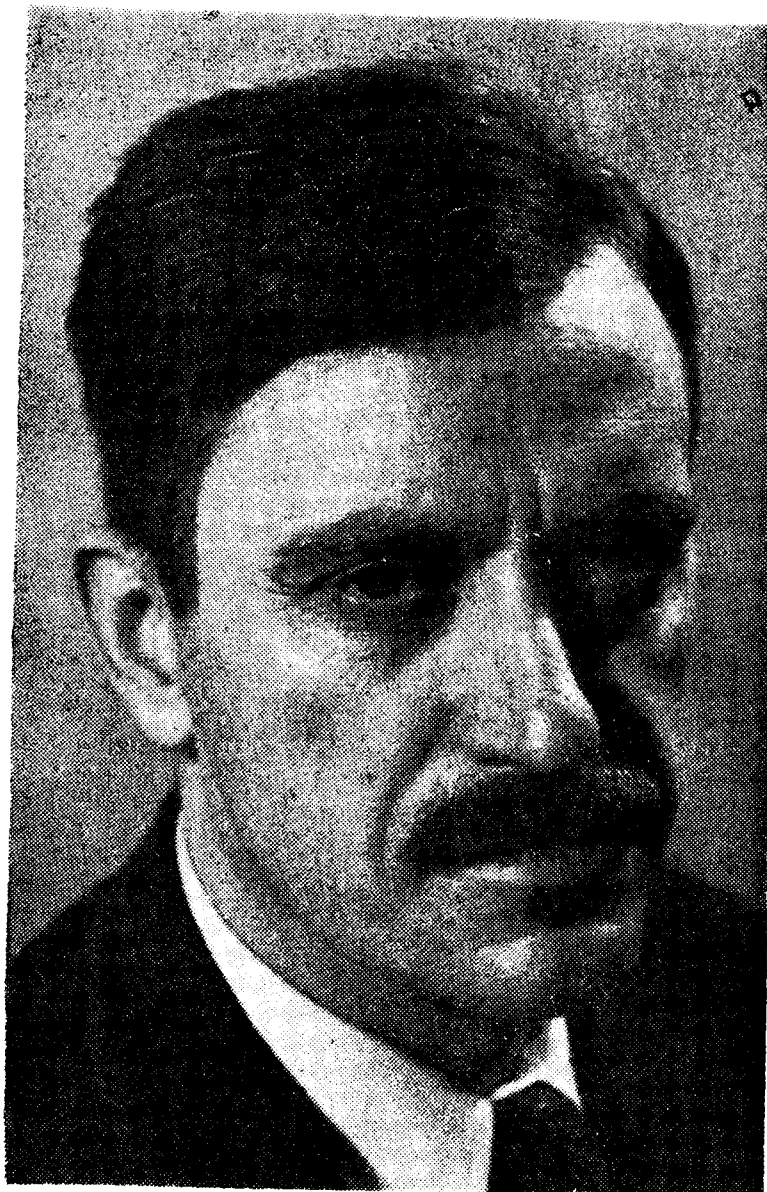
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EARL BROWDER

*Communist Candidate for President
of the United States*

Review of the Month

Republican Party Takes on Fascist Features—Landon's Small Men Compared with Hitler's Small Men—Republican Progressives Annihilated in Cleveland—Hearst, Landon and Wall Street—Coughlin's Maneuvers for a "Third" Ticket—A Trick to Help Landon—Townsend Movement in Danger—Labor Must Take the Lead—Communist Policies in Townsend and Coughlin Movements—Roosevelt in Texas—Big Capital and the Small Man—Roosevelt and the Small Man in the South—Coalition of Working Class and Its Allies—Next Steps in Farmer-Labor Party—Decisions of Chicago Conference—National Gathering to Curb Reaction and Supreme Court—Lewis, Hillman, Dubinsky—Pressure and Support from Unions—LaFollette's Announcement—The Steel Drive Is On—Foster's Proposals—Policies and Candidates Before the Ninth Communist Convention—Triumph of Soviet Democracy

THE Republican Party convention in Cleveland brought to light the fact that the party of Landon and Hoover, the party which is today receiving its "spiritual" and political guidance from Hearst, that this party of the most reactionary monopolies is undergoing *a process of fascistization*: it is beginning to display several characteristics of a fascist party. That must not be understood as meaning that the Republican Party is already a fascist party, or that it must inevitably become so. What the Republican Party will eventually become will depend upon many things which cannot now be clearly foreseen. But this much is already evident; the party which has become the rallying center of the most reactionary and fascist-minded monopolies—the Republican Party—has shown at its Cleveland convention that the fascist trends within it are strengthening and that it is taking on various fascist features.

Nothing demonstrates this fact more clearly than the nomination of Landon and the coming forward of the Landon people, the "small people", as the "bosses" of the Republican Party.

An attempt is being made to inveigle the masses into believing that the old bosses of the Republican Party, the spokesmen of Wall Street and of the monopolies, have been displaced from party control, that the Old Guard is no longer dominating the party. Walter Lippmann, reporting the Cleveland convention, wrote:

"The outstanding fact is that the control of the party is about to pass from the Old Guard to the Landon men." (*The New York Herald Tribune*, June 12.)

William Allen White, Landon's chief publicity agent, speaks of a "rebirth" of the Republican Party, of "certain tendencies, drifts and realignments" which point to a "reorganized Republican Party". (*The New York Times*, June 8.) And following the convention, the slogan has been set in circulation that the "Republican Party is captured by Main Street" and that the small town men have become the dominating influence in the G.O.P.

What is the meaning of all that? Was there really a realignment of class forces in the Republican Party favorable to the small people? Not at all. Whatever class realignments took place in the Republican Party, and such did take place, they were in the direction of *more monopoly control*, not less.

What are the facts? It is well known that there is a traditional "progressive" group in the Republican Party, a group that represents more or less consistently the interests of the well-to-do farmers and of the smaller businessmen, especially of the West. This group is identified with the names of such men as Senator Norris, Nye, Frazier and, to a lesser degree, Borah. Mayor LaGuardia is closely related to this group. There is, in fact, a considerable group of these progressive Republicans in Congress. If there was any force in the Republican Party that spoke for the "small man" in opposition to the Old Guard spokesmen of the monopolies, it was this traditional group of progressive Republicans. *Yet it was precisely this group that received the greatest defeat at the Cleveland convention of the Republican Party.* The progressive Republicans could not even make their voices heard at that convention, let alone influence its decisions or leadership. Borah, in his typically ineffective way, tried to do something, but he failed.

Had the control of the Republican Party really passed into the hands of "Main Street", the people at the head of it today would be the Norrises, Nyes, Fraziers, LaGuardias and suchlike. But the situation is exactly the opposite. Never was this group of progressive Republicans of lesser account in the Republican Party than today, after the Cleveland convention. There was no more pitiful figure in Cleveland than Borah.

And in the face of this most significant fact, from the point of view of class alignments—the *annihilation of the progressives in the Republican Party*—the myth is being spread that progressivism and the "small man" have taken charge of the Republican Party.

But the annihilation of the progressives is not all that happened in Cleveland. This was only one of the victories of the Morgan-

du Pont clique, and of Hearst, at the Republican convention. The second victory of extreme reaction was the nomination—*unanimous*—of Landon and the coming forward of the Landon people as the “bosses” of the Republican Party. Yes, this was a *victory* for extreme reaction, and not a defeat. Landon and his crowd became the “top men” in the Republican Party because Hearst and the Morgan-du Pont gang wanted it and because this gang was powerful enough to have its way in the Republican Party. And why was this so? *Because Landon and his men are the puppets of Hearst, Morgan, du Pont and Rockefeller.*

In saying this, we are not unmindful of the fact that the old Republican Party machine may not have liked everything that happened in Cleveland. It is quite conceivable that Mills, Hoover’s Secretary of the Treasury, who together with Aldrich (Rockefeller) helped Landon to frame his money plank, was a bit chagrined at being left out of the Resolutions Committee. It is also easy to understand that Wadsworth, who expected to receive the Vice Presidential nomination, would feel slighted at being given a back seat at the convention. These facts have significance. And what is it? It is the studied policy of extreme capitalist reaction to keep the old Republican Party machine as much in the background as possible and to push forward Landon and his men *as the new face of the party.*

That is precisely it. The Republican Party has been given a new face, or rather, a new *mask*; the Landon crowd is the new mask. And behind this new mask stare the ugly faces of Hearst, Hoover, Morgan, du Pont and Rockefeller—the face of extreme reaction, of the fascist-minded monopolies. It is well known that the real boss of the Republican Party was not the party machine (whoever may have been in control of it at the time) but monopoly capital. The machine was its servant. The thing that happened in Cleveland was this: the *machine* was partly *reorganized*, and the Landon men were put in charge, placed publicly as the face of the party, yet under the tutelage of such old and experienced hands as Hilles and Roraback, thus maintaining *continuity* and assuring the monopolies that Landon and his crowd will not go wrong. That is not to say that there will be no friction, or even fights, between the remnants of the old Republican Party machine and its new Landon face; such there will be, no doubt. Yet of greater significance is the fact that the Republican Party has been given a new face, the face of the “small man”.

We must analyze this “face” a bit closer. Hearst picked it. This in itself is a political characterization. Picked by Hearst means picked by the most vicious reactionary and fascist in the country. Yet it was not always so that candidates picked by Hearst were almost over-

night accepted by the most powerful monopolies; but this is what happened now. Landon, a person practically unknown outside of his own state, literally swept the Republican Party within a very short period of time. True, Hearst's press did a good deal to make Landon "popular", yet this alone cannot by any means account for the almost miraculous ease with which Landon "won" the Republican Party. The "miracle" lies somewhere else: it lies in the fact that extreme capitalist reaction, which rallied to and controls the Republican Party, decided to throw its support to Landon. That is why he won the Republican Party. Before the mass of Republican voters had any inkling of what was coming, Landon had already been named the Republican candidate by Hearst, Morgan, du Pont and Rockefeller.

These are Landon's bosses.

This is not only the opinion of the Communists. The National Popular Government League, in its pamphlet on candidates and issues compiled by Judson King, has this to say on Landon:

"Governor Landon, according to the League, is the recipient of active support from utility interests of all kinds and the prediction is made that if he is nominated and elected president he will not be friendly to the policies 'generally supported' by progressives of all parties." (*The New York Times*, June 1.)

That is putting it very mildly, of course. "*Active support from the utility interests*" means in plain language a tool of Morgan and du Pont.

Another far-from-Communist source, Senator Vandenberg, also sheds some light on the matter. The usually well-informed Arthur Krock of *The New York Times*, relating Vandenberg's tribulations in the Republican Party, makes the statement that Vandenberg had information to the effect that "*certain Wall Street financiers were heartily behind Mr. Landon.*" (*The New York Times*, June 14.)

Coming from Vandenberg, himself an aspirant for the Republican nomination who nevertheless supports Landon, this information given by Krock is of considerable importance. It leaves no doubt that Landon's bosses are Hearst and the reactionary monopolies.

And why did they pick Landon? They picked Landon because they sought to give the Republican Party a new face, the face of the "small man" of the West. They knew they had no chance of winning with Hoover's face or some one like it. And they also knew, what was known to all informed people, that only by getting the support of the rich and well-to-do farmers (pulling along the middle farmers) and of the small and medium business men, especially from the West, can they hope to put the Republican Party in office. Landon looked like the best face for that purpose. Hence Landon was picked.

Not that Landon himself is a "small man" in wealth and social position. He is one of the big Western oil magnates and a millionaire, and is no doubt closely associated with Rockefeller and other big oil interests. But this geographical position (a Westerner), the fact that he was so little known to the public and could therefore be built up into the "small man's" ideal—all this was no doubt decisive in making the monopolies adopt Landon.

And here we come to the crux of the whole matter. Extreme capitalist reaction in the United States, the fascist-minded monopolies, rallying around the Republican Party and dominating it, tries to exploit the resentment of the petty bourgeoisie against the trusts, against the ruination of the crisis and against some of Roosevelt's policies (N.R.A. favoring the monopolies, taxation of the small and medium incomes and some phases of the A.A.A.) in order to *broaden the mass base* of reaction, to inflame the "small man" against organized labor, to drive a wedge between the working class and all other toiling groups, to *isolate* the working class, *especially organized labor*, to *defeat Roosevelt in the coming elections*, to *obstruct the coming together of labor and toiling farmers and middle classes into a Farmer-Labor Party*, and in this way to open the road for a more decisive advance of capitalist reaction. And what does this mean in the present period? *It means fascization, the fascization of the Republican Party.*

The platform of the Republican Party, adopted in Cleveland, promises everything to everybody, especially to big capital, on the one hand, and to the "small man", on the other. This is in true Hitler style.

The candidate of the Republican Party—Landon—and the Landon men "in control" of the party, are meant to put the "small man's" face upon the party of the most reactionary monopolies in the country. Again in the style of fascism.

The Republican Party has taken on new features of a fascist character. The political line before the Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party shows the way of effective struggle against this menace to the working class of this country and the toiling people generally.

* * *

COUGHLIN. He seems definitely to be making headway with his policy of capturing Congress—capturing it for reaction. The results of the primary elections in Ohio were disturbing, to say the least. And the results in Maine are in no way reassuring. Especially ominous is the developing collaboration among Coughlin, Gerald K. Smith (Huey Long's successor) and Townsend. There can be

no doubt that the Republican-Democratic attack on the Townsend movement in the guise of an investigation, abetted by Roosevelt, and the failure of the leaders of Labor's Non-Partisan League (Lewis and Hillman) to invite the collaboration of the Townsend movement as well as of the followers of Coughlin and Long for independent political organization and action, played directly into the hands of reaction, into the hands of the Republican Party. We have warned against it, and have appealed to Lewis and Hillman to step forth and combat the reactionary maneuvers of Coughlin and Smith into which Townsend is now being drawn, but so far without result. The only positive action that was developed for combating the reactionary maneuvers in the Townsend movement, and also in Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice, was the work of the Communists and their policy of winning the masses in these movements for united front struggles for the burning needs of the working people.

The result of this work of the Communists can already be seen in various parts of the country. In California, for example, the home of the Townsend movement, large numbers of clubs are swinging into joint struggles against reaction (against the Criminal Syndicalism Law) and are moving in the direction of a Farmer-Labor Party. More intensive work among the Townsendites along the lines of Communist Party policy will produce such and even greater results in most places.

Yet the immediate danger of the Townsend movement, as well as of the Social Justice units, being drawn into the Coughlin political maneuvers is too acute and too strong to be checked by the Communists alone. Organized labor, and especially the Committee for Industrial Organization, must step forward and take a leading place in the situation. The least that must be done at once is to offer to the Townsendites, to the membership of the National Union for Social Justice and to the followers of Smith the collaboration of organized labor in the struggle against reaction and for the improvement of the conditions of all toilers—workers, farmers, middle classes and Negroes. Those leaders of Labor's Non-Partisan League who claim to be sincerely in favor of defeating reaction and combating fascism and who maintain that they stand for independent political action are in duty bound to do all in their power to check the reactionary maneuvers of Coughlin, to prevent him from utilizing the National Union for Social Justice, the Townsendites and the Huey Long movement for promoting the victory of reaction, the victory of Landon and of the Republican Party.

Let there be no mistake about the reactionary maneuvers of Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith, into which Townsend is being drawn. Smith is no doubt a creature of the Liberty League, and

Coughlin's reactionary and fascist designs are even clearer. Their joint strategy of capturing Congress fits completely into the scheme of the most reactionary monopolies that are supporting Landon. Providing for the eventuality that Landon may not be elected, these monopolies seek further entrenchment in Congress in addition to their power over the Supreme Court.

Furthermore, the Hearst-Morgan-du Pont clique has by no means given up hope of electing Landon. They know, however, that there are large numbers of toilers who will not readily, if at all, vote for Landon even though they are opposed to Roosevelt. These are the workers, farmers and middle class groups that would have supported a Farmer-Labor presidential candidate had there been such in the field. From this fact Coughlin and Smith tend to draw certain conclusions, one of which is the placing of a Coughlin-Smith-Townsend presidential ticket. And for what purpose? *For the purpose of electing Landon.*

Up to the middle of June, Coughlin kept on insisting that he was not interested in presidents but only in the lawmakers. Then all at once he began to insinuate, in a mysterious and semi-secret fashion, that he might also favor some action on the question of president. He mentioned some mysterious candidate for president on an "independent" ticket and even party. (*The New York World-Telegram*, June 16.) By the time this is off the press, something more definite may be known about Coughlin's new plans. But that much has been clear for a long while, and is certainly very clear today—Coughlin works for reaction and fascism, whether in his Congressional or presidential policy. *Any move by Coughlin and Gerald Smith to launch a national ticket is a move to elect Landon*, no matter what Coughlin may continue to say on his opposition to both Roosevelt and Landon. It is a move to prevent the development of the Farmer-Labor Party.

The fascization of the Republican Party takes place side by side with the efforts of Coughlin, Smith, etc., to build up more open mass fascist formations. Both of these developments, as well as the growth of Black Legions, Ku Klux, Sentinels, and similar organizations, are backed by the most reactionary monopolies and serve their reactionary and fascist plans.

The answer to the Coughlin danger is independent working class political action and a coalition with the farmers, Negroes, and middle classes. It is the promotion of the Farmer-Labor Party. It is *immediate action* by Lewis and Hillman in support of electing a large bloc of Farmer-Labor Congressmen, local Farmer-Labor governments, especially in steel and coal centers, in collaboration with the Farmer-Labor movement nationally, and an *approach to the Town-*

send movement and Coughlin following for joint action on a joint platform.

* * *

ABOVE all, the Communists are now called upon to intensify their work of clarifying the masses in the Townsend and Coughlin movements on all these issues, as proposed to the Ninth Party Convention.

As we pointed out at the time, the Congressional "investigation" of the Townsend movement was prompted chiefly by a desire to discredit the demand for old age pensions and was not intended to clarify some of the fallacies of the Townsend Plan. True, the investigation disclosed that certain capitalist politicians were seeking personal enrichment out of the movement, but this was the result of the fact that the leadership of the movement was too closely connected with capitalist politics and capitalist politicians, and not because of the Townsend Plan. The cure for and guarantee against corruption was and is—now more than before—independence from capitalist politics, collaboration with the independent political movements of the workers and farmers, and a true democratic form of organization. Surely, these things could not be given the Townsend movement by the Congressional investigation. That investigation played directly into the hands of those who were seeking, and are still seeking, to make use of the Townsend movement for the purposes of reaction—Coughlin, Smith, the Liberty League.

The departure of Clemens from the Townsend movement and its "reorganization" by Townsend do not settle the question. The reorganization which was supposed to have placed the movement on a democratic basis, giving the clubs and the membership the right to decide upon the policies of the movement, was not carried through. While promising to abide by the decisions of the membership, Townsend went ahead and, on his own responsibility, adopted a course of political action which can only spell disaster to the struggle for old age pensions. We find Townsend deeply entangled with Gerald Smith and Coughlin in a course of action which, if successful, will place into office the worst enemies of old age pensions—Landon, Wall Street, Morgan, and du Pont.

What does the membership of the Townsend clubs think about it? In the middle of July the Townsend movement will hold a national convention in Cleveland. It is vitally necessary that this convention repudiate the maneuvers of Smith and Coughlin. For the sake of the Townsend movement and the struggle for old age pensions, the convention should definitely declare against any policy that will work for the election of Landon and the victory of reaction

in the elections. It should declare in favor of independent political action and in favor of collaboration with the forces of labor and the toiling farmers in the building of a Farmer-Labor Party.

A joint approach to the Townsend convention by the Farmer-Labor movement and Labor's Non-Partisan League—a joint appeal for common political action—will have a powerful effect upon the action of the Townsend convention.

Coughlin and Smith are exploiting the slogan of "Neither Roosevelt Nor Landon" in order to utilize the Townsend movement for the defeat of Roosevelt, for the election of Landon and of a reactionary Congress.

We should tell the Townsend movement: defeat Landon—the chief enemy of old age pensions; don't depend upon Roosevelt; join with organized labor and the toiling farmers to build the Farmer-Labor Party.

* * *

AT THE Dallas Exposition, in Texas, President Roosevelt made a strong speech against monopoly and for the "small men", "the average men in business and industry and agriculture". But, as usual, a lot of generalities, and nothing specific. For example:

"Any elemental policy, economic or political, which tends to eliminate these dependable defenders of democratic institutions and to concentrate control in the hands of a few small, powerful groups, is directly opposed to the stability of government and to democratic government itself." (*The New York Times*, June 13.)

What about the business sections of the N.R.A.? Didn't these "tend to eliminate" the small and average men? It would seem that, with the Darrow and other reports, there can no longer be any doubt about it. The business sections of the N.R.A. were definitely helping the monopolies to hamstring and crush the small men. Has Roosevelt now developed some other means of protecting the small men? And if so, what are they? He did not mention them at the Dallas Exposition.

Yet it is clear that many of the small men have not forgotten the N.R.A. And it is equally clear that Landon and the Republican Party are concentrating mainly on winning for reaction the small men precisely on the basis of their experiences with the N.R.A. If Roosevelt has nothing better to offer to the small men, the "yeomanry" of business, industry and agriculture, than the N.R.A. he has mighty little ammunition with which to fight Landon among these decisive sections of voters.

True, Roosevelt pleaded for federal action as against the Republican position of no action, or state action, which is the same

thing. It will be admitted that here Roosevelt is on firm ground: his arguments for federal action are good arguments. But that only settles one issue between Roosevelt and Landon. It does not settle the more important issue between Roosevelt and the small men. It is this: what precisely and concretely is Roosevelt going to do to curb the monopolies and to protect the small men? What is he going to do to prevent the Supreme Court from nullifying federal legislation? Surely, it does the small men little good to hear Roosevelt declaim on the superiority of federal action when the same Roosevelt proposes to do nothing that would make sure that the Supreme Court will not continue to throw into the waste basket that federal legislation.

Both Landon and Roosevelt are fighting for the small men. Landon, the tool of the most reactionary monopolies, does it in the Hitler style, with fascist-like demagoguery, and for the purposes of unrestrained capitalist reaction and fascization. Roosevelt, on the other hand, really aims to eliminate the most glaring abuses and excesses of some of the monopoly capitalists; and, in this sense, one can credit him with a desire to do something for the small men. This is where Landon and Roosevelt *differ*. But to say this alone is to say only part of the truth. For immediately the question is raised: how did the Roosevelt policies work out *in practice*? In practice Roosevelt's policies helped the big men most of the time, *some* of the small men, *part* of the time, and most of the really small men, at *no* time. In the N.R.A. period, the chief beneficiaries of its price fixing and regulations were the big capitalists; the small men were the victims. In the A.A.A., the big agrarians were always helped, the middle farmers of the grain regions were helped to a much smaller extent, and the small farm owner, tenant, and sharecropper were victims of the A.A.A. most of the time.

Roosevelt's utility measures, and banking and stock exchange measures, no doubt tended to curb somewhat the most glaring abuses of various individuals and groups of the financial oligarchy, which explains in part the determination of reaction to defeat Roosevelt. But how much was the small man really helped against the monopolies? Very little, indeed. With all the Roosevelt "reforms", which Norman Thomas thinks are the best under capitalism, the monopolies in this country are today stronger than they ever were. This is a fact which no one can successfully deny.

And when we come to the South, Roosevelt's main stronghold, how much was the small man there helped by his policies? It is sufficient merely to ask the question, ask it of the small farmer in the South, of the sharecropper, of the Negro, to receive an answer that is annihilating for Roosevelt. In the South, it is the big man, the

landowner and slavedriver, that is the chief beneficiary of the Roosevelt policies. The flogging of Reverend Claude C. Williams and Miss Willie Sue Blagden in Eastern Arkansas, in connection with the cotton strike, is one of the most outrageous examples of how the Roosevelt policies work out in practice in the South.

Besides, where does "smallness" begin? Who is the small man and who is the big man? Roosevelt's definition, as given in Dallas, is altogether too vague. Here it is:

"Those who have an ownership in their business and a responsibility which gives them stability." (*The New York Times*, June 13.)

Well, the only group of people that would *nominally* be excluded from this definition are the holding companies, and of these only the very top stock-manipulating groups. Which is all right as far as it goes but this does not even begin to affect monopoly domination. Not a bit. It may be said that it is annoying to the monopolies and that they do not like it. It is in the nature of pinpricks which the Morgandupont gang resents. But no sane person will maintain honestly that it weakens them or protects the really small men from their oppression.

The trouble, the chief trouble, with Roosevelt is that he is trying to help the small men (or says he is) *without weakening the monopolies and without seriously hurting the class interests of big capital*. More than that. He is handling the question of helping the small man from the standpoint of *strengthening capitalism*. This Roosevelt will not deny, although he may put it in different words. Why, he nearly said that much himself in his Dallas speech as quoted above. He said in effect that the small men must be protected because they are the chief guarantee of "stability of government". And what does this mean in the mouth of a bourgeois statesman? What does it mean from *a class point of view*? It means to protect and strengthen, not the small men, but the *rich* capitalist farmer, the *big* industrialist, landowner and business man, and to do it in such a way as to guard the class interests of big capital.

True, Roosevelt also said that the small men are the foundation of "democratic government itself", meaning of course bourgeois democracy. Here again is where Roosevelt differs from Landon, who is the tool of all those reactionary forces that seek the destruction of the democratic liberties of the people. But Roosevelt is *not* defending the interests of the small men, with the result that large sections of them are in danger of being entangled in the nets of the reactionary and fascist-like demagoguery of the Landons, Coughlins, and Hearsts. With the result, in other words, of becoming the instrument for the

destruction of democratic liberties and rights. No, the democratic rights of the people, which the Landon crowd seeks to annihilate, are very unsafe in the hands of Roosevelt.

His is a policy of allying or tying down the small men to big capital, with big capital dominating in the alliance, for the purpose of strengthening capitalism, under pressure giving small concessions to various groups of small men (mostly not so small), and looking out always for the class interests of big capital. This cannot mean anything else but strengthening the monopolies.

Ours is a policy of a genuine alliance, a coalition between the working class, the toiling farmers, Negroes and middle classes to combat the capitalist offensive, to defeat the Landon crowd in the elections, to fight the fascist menace, to break the stranglehold of the monopolies, to improve the conditions of the toiling people at the expense of the rich. Such an alliance or coalition only the Farmer-Labor Party can embrace and build up. And in this way the conditions will be prepared for the abolition of capitalism altogether, the only way of getting rid of the monopolies, and of building socialism in this country.

The Democratic Party convention will renominate Roosevelt (that is certain), and *that* will also be its platform, regardless of whatever specific planks the written document may contain. For some of the leaders of Labor's Non-Partisan League this may seem sufficient as labor's answer to Landon and to the advance of capitalist reaction under the banner of the Republican Party. For us and, we believe, for the American working class and all toilers, this is far from sufficient. Even if Roosevelt's reelection were certain, which it is not (remember the fascist-like demagoguery of the Landon crowd among the "small men", the maneuvers of Coughlin and Gerald Smith, and the still undisclosed anti-Roosevelt strategy of the Al Smiths and Raskobs), we repeat, even if the Roosevelt re-election were assured, the working class and all toilers can place no dependence upon him, let alone upon the dominating forces of his party, as a check upon the advancing offensive of capitalist reaction. Hence, the independent power of the masses must be forged without delay, *now and immediately*, in the course of the election struggle. *Organize the unorganized and build the Farmer-Labor Party*—that is the answer!

The Communist Party convention will nominate its presidential and vice presidential candidates, will formulate its platform, and will wage a determined campaign *for a consistent class policy of the American working class*. In the main outline, this policy is embodied in the draft resolution on Browder's report. (*Daily Worker*, June 16.) With regard to the Communist election policies, the Party

will aim to win the votes and to rally around itself all those workers, toiling farmers, Negroes, and middle class elements that see in the united front and in the Farmer-Labor Party their chief weapon for combating reaction, fascism, and war. The Party and its candidates will come before the masses as the only consistent, determined and competent fighter for the united front and the Farmer-Labor Party and appeal for their votes and support on that basis—on the basis of forging the independent power of the masses for the immediate improvement of their conditions and for creating the prerequisites for the socialist revolution, Soviet power, and socialism. In this way will our Party fulfil its mission and special task of the present period; the tasking of fighting in the front ranks of the working class against the offensive of capitalist reaction and fascism, the task of defeating the tool of this offensive—Landon, the task of building the united and independent power of the masses in the course of this historic struggle, the task of accelerating the coming of the day when the American working class in alliance with all toilers will lead in the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism in this country.

* * *

WHAT is the next step in the promotion of the Farmer-Labor Party movement following from the important decisions of the Chicago Conference? These decisions give the answer. It is to stimulate and assist in the election of a large bloc of Farmer-Labor representatives to Congress, to help build local Farmer-Labor Parties that will fight for control of local governments, to assist in the victory of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, and to create the possibility for the calling of a national Farmer-Labor Party convention. These decisions, together with the adoption of a platform and the setting up of an Advisory Council to the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Association, enable the Farmer-Labor movement to proceed more confidently with the building up of its strength.

It is quite evident that the decisions of the Conference are mature and practical. No one will deny the powerful urge from below for a Farmer-Labor Party. This urge exists, not only in the traditional Farmer-Labor Party regions, although there it has reached a higher stage of organization. This urge is strong and spreading in the unions, especially in those that are affiliated to Labor's Non-Partisan League, as well as in the others. Suffice it to mention such unions as the United Mine Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies Garment Workers, the Auto Workers, etc. The membership and active workers of these unions are for a Labor

Party, for building the Labor Party now, although it will not have a presidential candidate in 1936.

Yet it is also evident that these unions are not yet in the *national* Farmer-Labor Party movement, and are only sporadically, here and there, participating in local and state movements. Why is this so? Why are these unions holding back? They are holding back because they are *restrained* by some of the *policies* of their national leaders, the policies of depending upon Roosevelt and of delaying the launching of a Labor Party to some future date. *This restraint must be removed.*

It must be removed in order to free the unions to step in and take *the lead* in the fight to elect a bloc of Farmer-Labor Party Congressmen and to build local Farmer-Labor Parties, especially in the centers of coal, steel, rubber, auto, and textile. We should point particularly to the experience in Akron, where the lead of the unions and the participation of the Socialist and Communist Parties resulted in the formation of an important Labor Party with a genuine mass base—a party that can fight successfully in the elections. We can have many Akrons, but the reason we don't have them yet is the restraint upon the unions through the policies of depending upon Roosevelt and also through the reformist-Trotskyist-sectarian influences in the Socialist Party. Remove these restraints, and a new chapter will open in the fight for the political independence of the working class, in the fight for the people's front—the Farmer-Labor Party.

We are glad to state that some of the leading elements in the C.I.O. unions are beginning to see the above truth, as demonstrated in a recent issue of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' official journal.

Now about the national convention of the Farmer-Labor Party. The Chicago Conference declared in favor of it and requested the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Association to consult with other important bodies with a view to realizing this objective. Of such bodies among organized labor, the most important ones are clearly the unions of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League. If a referendum were to be taken in these unions on the question of calling the national convention in 1936, it is perfectly safe to assume that the majority would favor this proposition, barring official restraint and pressure. Again, therefore, we confront the task of helping to remove this restraint.

It was an auspicious omen that three outstanding leaders of the C.I.O.—Lewis, Hillman, and Dubinsky—found it necessary to send communications to the Chicago Farmer-Labor Party Conference. True, they differ in degree of positive attitude, but they all evidence a desire to maintain contact with the Farmer-Labor Party movement.

Such contact is already an achievement, but it must be made productive of concrete results. And this means *collaboration*, collaboration between the Farmer-Labor movement, the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League. The broad basis for such collaboration has been given by life itself: to fight jointly against the offensive of capitalist reaction and for the defeat of the Landon-Hearst-Republican outfit in 1936. On this basis common actions are already possible on electing Farmer-Labor Party Congressmen and on fighting for local Farmer-Labor Party governments. This should be started at once. This alone would already be a tremendous step forward. It would give the C.I.O. organizing drive, in steel, etc., an additional weapon for achieving its aims.

But we cannot stop at that. The basis must already be laid in 1936 for a national Farmer-Labor Party. If Roosevelt is re-elected, the Farmer-Labor Party will be the power to compel concessions; and if he is defeated, the Farmer-Labor Party will be the only force—this and fighting trade unions—that will enable labor and its allies to withstand the offensive of reaction and to open up a counter-offensive. In either event, it is the only way to build a barrier to reaction and fascism; and the sooner we start the better.

We say again as we have said many times before, but this time with more hope of convincing: Remember the fascist-like demagoguery of Landon among the middle classes, the maneuvers of Coughlin and Smith for a “third” ticket, and the anti-Roosevelt strategy of the Al Smiths and Raskobs. Remember that the only way to prevent the middle classes from falling in the wake of reaction, and of the semi-fascist adventurers, is by attracting such movements as Townsend, Social Justice, and Share-the-Wealth to the banners of an independent and fighting working class, to the banners of the Farmer-Labor Party, even though it will have no national ticket. For this, we need a national convention in 1936. *And for this we need the collaboration of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League with the organized Farmer-Labor Party movement, as expressed in the Chicago Conference.*

We speak directly to Lewis, Hillman, and Dubinsky, because they have demonstrated a desire to maintain contact with the Farmer-Labor Party movement. And we say to them: collaborate for the above ends. We propose to the trade union locals, membership, and active workers to exert *the utmost pressure upon their national leadership*, especially in the unions of the C.I.O., to collaborate actively with the Farmer-Labor movement along the above lines, pressure *and support* for this policy.

The interests of the masses demand a national convention in 1936. The draft resolution on Browder's report as submitted to the

Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party says on this point the following:

"In order to promote the movement for the calling of a national convention to launch a national party, and to gain for this movement the widest support among the trade unions, toiling farmers, Negroes and middle classes, it is the opinion of the Communist Party that this convention should be projected as a national gathering of the representatives of all toilers to mobilize the masses against the offensive of reaction, to crystallize a mass movement demanding immediate action by Congress to curb the powers of the Supreme Court and to bring forth prominently and centrally the mass demand for amending the Constitution."

Let us have action. Time does not wait.

* * *

SENATOR LAFOLLETTE'S announcement (*The New York Post*, June 18) that the progressives in Congress will hold a conference shortly to decide upon their policies in the national campaign is important news. It will tend to counteract for a while the maneuvers of Coughlin and Gerald Smith for a "third" ticket to help elect Landon. At least, it will tend to have that effect temporarily in the Northwestern States, the traditionally "third party" region of the country. It is clear that this conference of progressive Congressmen, mostly Republicans or former Republicans, can do nothing less, in the face of the Hearst-Landon victory in Cleveland, than to break with the Republican Party emphatically and definitely. No genuine bourgeois progressive can assume responsibility for Landon, let alone support him, without betraying everything that "progressivism" stands for.

Yet it would be a grave error for Lewis and Hillman to rest satisfied with what this progressive conference, if it comes together, will do, assuming even the best results. Organized labor can gain a good deal by collaborating, and even allying itself, with this progressive group, *provided* organized labor itself acts as a *politically independent* force and takes *the lead* in such collaboration with the progressive group in Congress. The lead for a broad national gathering of all Farmer-Labor, trade union and progressive forces for joint action in the elections, and against reaction generally, should come from the C.I.O. in collaboration with the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Association and the Advisory Council set up by the Chicago conference.

The Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation of Wisconsin teaches us certain lessons. The idea of a coalition of labor, farmers, and middle classes, embraced in the Federation, is a good one. Out of it

a real people's front can grow. But for this, labor must play in the Federation a more leading role and every trace of Red-baiting, leading to the exclusion of the Communist Party, must be eliminated.

Labor cannot afford to duplicate on a national scale the weaknesses of the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation in Wisconsin.

* * *

AND then the Socialist Party. Its convention in Cleveland gave a very unsatisfactory answer to these burning needs and tasks of the American working class. That it defeated the Old Guard—the enemies of the united front and the Hearst supporters against the Soviet Union—is an important and progressive development in the Socialist Party. Yet, thanks to the Thomas policy of concessions to Hoan (the Right Wing) on questions of principle and on the united front, and to the hesitancy of the Lefts clearly to differentiate themselves from the Right, the central documents and decisions of the Cleveland convention bear all the marks of a bad compromise between the Right wing, Trotskyist influence, and genuine Left positions.

The Socialist campaign platform makes no mention of the Farmer-Labor Party, while Norman Thomas, the standard bearer of the Socialist Party, inclines to treat the Farmer-Labor Party as a rival and competitor of the Socialist Party. Clearly, there is a serious danger that the Socialist Party will, in the course of the election struggle, become an obstacle to the growth of the Farmer-Labor movement. It is, therefore, the duty of the Lefts to do all in their power to prevent this from happening.

The Socialist Party must be won for collaboration with the Farmer-Labor movement and it lies in the power of the Lefts and of the membership of the Socialist Party to bring this about. Especially the trade union elements in the Socialist Party cannot afford to see their party go wrong on this question. The Cleveland convention adopted a special resolution on the Farmer-Labor Party, which, though inadequate and all too abstract, may be helpful to the Lefts in overcoming the dangerous possibilities created by the platform. But this means a fight by the Lefts for the Farmer-Labor Party. It will not be very easy. There is the reformist Thomas fear of a Farmer-Labor Party "rival", the growing Trotskyist obstructions and their invasion of the Socialist Party, the abstract and academic way in which some of the militants treat the Farmer-Labor Party question—all these are tangible difficulties in the way of winning the Socialist Party for active participation in the Farmer-Labor Party movement locally and nationally. There is also the additional diffi-

culty of Thomas' idea that a Socialist campaign means talking socialism without doing anything to fight for it, as well as the dictum of Thomas that if you want reforms "stick to the Roosevelt administration"—it is these reformist ideas of Thomas that lead him to criticize the Communist policies for a Farmer-Labor Party as "opportunism". Yes, there are difficulties, but they can be overcome, if the Lefts fulfil their duty and fight for a proletarian class struggle policy.

The Socialist Party membership has two instructive examples (at least) to go by. In Seattle, Washington, the Socialist Party local organization placed itself in opposition to the candidates of the Commonwealth Federation—an incipient Farmer-Labor movement which the Communist Party supported. The result was: Socialist Party isolation, a miserable vote for the Socialist Party candidates, which nevertheless contributed to the failure of the Commonwealth Federation's candidate to win and to the victory of the reactionary candidate, and a weakening of labor's forces. This is example Number 1. Then there is the example of Akron, already discussed in these pages. The trade union movement together with the Socialist Party and Communist Party formed a Labor Party which is universally recognized as an important organization which will play a great role locally, in the state, as well as in stimulating the movement nationally.

Our proposal is: *Don't repeat Seattle. Emulate Akron.*

* * *

THE organizing drive in steel is on. The Steel Workers' Organizing Committee, formed by the C.I.O. in agreement with the Amalgamated Association (A.A.), met in Pittsburgh, mapped out the campaign and set the machinery going. By all appearances, a new chapter in the American labor movement is about to open.

It goes without saying that this organizing drive in steel commands the active support of the American working class and all toilers. A powerful industrial union in steel, and this is what the drive must aim to achieve, will mean a strong and united trade union movement, a stronger working class and consequently a stronger front of all exploited against the exploiters and the offensive of reaction. It will also mean a powerful base of support for the Farmer-Labor Party.

All this will, of course, not come by itself. It has to be fought for with the utmost determination and with the application of correct policies and methods of work. Based upon the experiences of the great steel strike in 1919 and subsequent campaigns of trade union organization, the Communist Party and its chairman, William Z. Foster, have made known a number of fundamental propositions

that would have to be adhered to in order to insure the success of the organizing drive in steel. First and foremost is the *democratization* of the campaign—the building up of a network of local committees of steel workers themselves, through their lodges, as well as other unions in the locality. It is clear that the success of the drive hinges primarily upon the utmost utilization of all the creative and organizing forces, the initiative and experiences of the workers themselves. Second in importance is *the popularization of the basic demands* of the steel workers for which the union will fight. The masses of steel workers are interested in a union that will honestly fight for the improvement of their conditions (wages, hours, speed-up, employment, spy systems, etc.). The demands of the workers on all these issues are the immediate program upon which they want to be organized. The need for keeping these demands in the forefront of the campaign is emphasized anew by the maneuvers of the steel companies promising to raise wages and to give other concessions. This is clearly an attempt to take the edge off the drive and the answer to it is: popularize the demands of the workers for which the union will fight.

Another important proposition is that the campaign be started simultaneously in all the main steel centers and as soon as organizing forces can be assembled. This, in fact, is the key to the success of the drive, as emphasized many times by Foster. It would seem from the announcement of Murray that this is the intention of the Organizing Committee. If so, it is vital to make sure that this intention be actually realized. It should be clearly understood that only such a simultaneous drive in all main steel centers can effectively counteract (if not forestall) the attempt of the steel companies to provoke, by discharges and otherwise, isolated and premature local strike actions.

A further fundamental item is the immediate reinstatement with full rights of all the militant and progressive elements that were expelled from the U.M.W.A., A.A. and other unions associated with the C.I.O. The moral effect of such action for the unification and enthusiasm of the workers will be great. It will also supply numerous capable organizers who have the confidence of the workers. And in general: the organizing crews must be picked from the most experienced organizers *who are able to win the confidence of the steel workers.*

It goes without saying that this campaign will require a big fight for civil liberties, against the spy system, the dissolution of the private armies of the companies, etc., and it will be necessary to press for and utilize the Senatorial investigation authorized under the LaFollette resolution. It is also of great importance that, in connection with the steel drive, the C.I.O. should encourage and support organiza-

tion in other industries; metal, for example. This would demonstrate to the members of the Machinists' Union that the C.I.O. policies, far from hurting their union, can help them to bring large numbers of new members into their organization. It is also necessary that a proper approach be adopted toward the independent unions and some of the company unions for the purpose of bringing them into the A.A.

The Communist Party has pledged its full support to the organizing drive. Fighting for a united and powerful American Federation of Labor, based upon industrial unions, democratically organized and following a policy of class struggle, the Communist Party has declared its support of the decision of the C.I.O. not to yield to the illegal and splitting demands of the Executive Council that the C.I.O. disband and give up its work for organizing the unorganized into the A. F. of L. Green-Hutcheson & Co., who have again exposed themselves as the agents of Hearst-Morgan-du Pont, the flunkys of capitalist reaction appearing at the Republican convention with a "proposal" to break off relations with the Soviet Union, are seeking to split the A. F. of L. and are thus fulfilling the desires of the trusts and monopolies. As against these betrayers of labor, the whole trade union movement should rally to preserve the unity of the A. F. of L., to organize the unorganized into industrial unions, to follow the policy of class struggle, to build the Farmer-Labor Party.

The organizing drive in steel is on. All forces in support of a powerful industrial union in the steel industry!

* * *

THE triumph of Soviet democracy—as embodied in the draft of the new Constitution of the Soviet Union—is the triumph of socialism, the socialism that was made possible by the socialist revolution in 1917, the glorious struggle against foreign intervention and counter-revolution, the New Economic policy, and the epoch-making Five-Year Plans of socialist industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture. This triumph of Soviet democracy is a direct result of the victory of socialism made possible by the historic successes of socialist construction under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. It is the triumph of the working class and its allies everywhere.

Capitalist reaction and fascism are on the offensive against the democratic liberties of the people, against the institutions of bourgeois democracy. Confronted with this menace, the working class and all toilers must fight to the last for the preservation and extension of their civil rights and democratic liberties. This is today the main road of struggle against capitalism and for socialism, for the socialist

revolution which will make possible the triumph of Soviet democracy everywhere.

Soviet democracy is the only real democracy—this is what the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. shows. It proclaims the establishment, and guarantees to every citizen “*the right to a job, study, and leisure*”. This is no formal democracy proclaiming “equality of opportunity” and “equality before the law”, which in practice means fifteen million unemployed, wealth and leisure for the few and poverty and oppression for the many. Bourgeois democracy never was and never can be real democracy. Only on the basis of socialism can real democracy be built. And this is what happened in the Soviet Union.

We, in the United States, are fighting for jobs, for higher wages, for shorter hours. We demand the opening of the closed factories to provide work for the unemployed. This the workers must do in sheer struggle for self-preservation against the attacks of the capitalist class. Yet we must realize, seeing the example of the Soviet Union, that the “right to work” can be guaranteed to every citizen and made a reality only by a socialist society resulting from the socialist revolution and Soviet power.

This triumph of Soviet democracy is inextricably connected with the victory of socialism, the growth of its economy and the well-being of the people. Concurrently with the report of the new Soviet Constitution, the news comes that carloadings of freight have doubled in the last eighteen months, rising from a daily average of 45,000-50,000 to 99,000 daily. Production of consumers’ goods (as well as producers’) is on the increase.

“In the first five months of this year production of consumers’ goods increased 29 per cent compared with the same period last year and heavy industry, that is, coal, oil, iron, steel and machines—the means of production—increased 37 per cent.” (Walter Duranty, *The New York Times*, June 15.)

A great, free and independent country—a country of victorious socialism. A power for good—a power for peace—to the benefit of the toilers and all friends of progress throughout the world!

A. B.

Platforms and Issues in 1936

By DAVID RAMSEY

THE 1936 election campaign will be the most important one conducted in the United States since the Civil War. Its world background is the threat of fascism and war arising out of the general crisis of the capitalist system. At home the backdrop is the failure of the New Deal and the drive by ultra-reactionary capitalist groups towards fascism.

In the coming elections, reaction will try to achieve its aims primarily through the Republican Party and its candidates—Landon and Knox. Today the Republican Party is the rallying center for the most reactionary bankers and industrialists, who have as their immediate objective the defeat of Roosevelt at the polls in November. Landon is nothing but a front man for Hearst and the Liberty League. He was picked because he is a docile puppet who will carry out every order of the reactionaries in their war against the American people.

ULTRA-REACTION IN PROGRESSIVE GARB

The election tactics of the Republican Party, its platform and its presidential candidate were handpicked by Hearst and the Liberty Leaguers months before the Convention was held in Cleveland. A fiction has been created, which will be increasingly stressed during the campaign. Landon is presented to the people as the leader of a "progressive revolt" against the Old Guard and the machine politicians within the Republican Party. The Hearst press hailed the nomination as one which was "obviously the free, spontaneous and uninfluenced expression of a people's choice". The voice of an important section of finance capital—the *New York Herald Tribune*—spoke at great length of how "the bosses" had been driven from control. But Landon had been nominated by Hearst last December when the latter went to Kansas and decided that "Landon can be nominated by the Republicans and elected. He understands the issues."

There is an obvious motive behind this tactic of portraying the Republican Party as a progressive party fighting the dictatorial tendencies of the New Deal. For the first time since the death of Lincoln the Republicans are not out in the open as the conservative party of American capitalism. This is because the working population resents the reactionary doctrines of the Liberty League. During 1935 and

at the beginning of 1936, the Liberty Leaguers were directing a frontal assault against the Roosevelt administration. They were spending over \$50,000 a month in their anti-New Deal campaign and were flooding the country with millions of pamphlets. The spectacle of billionaires crying for liberty did not go over very well, especially when Senate investigating committees exposed the support and donations which the Liberty League had given fascist and semi-fascist groups. Consequently the Liberty Leaguers retired from the limelight and the emphasis was changed to the miraculous rebirth of the Republican Party. From the chrysalis of Mellon and Morgan emerged the progressive butterfly Landon, supposedly without Liberty League coloring, but with a strong reek of oil money.

A great deal of money was spent to buy Landon's nomination, but it was such a slick job that only the insiders know the actual amount and the men who put up the money. Wall Street created the "people's" demand for Landon, and to maintain the spirit of the farce, the worst reactionaries were shoved into the background if their Liberty League connections were known. Wadsworth and Mills, two of the most important Republicans, were kept off the platform committee, because they were tainted in the public mind with the Liberty League virus. The real bosses of the Republican Party retired to the wings and let their stooges take the stage to give the impression that Landon was picked by popular choice in a revolt against bossism.

This retirement from the limelight by the Liberty Leaguers is only a tactical maneuver. Landon is the kept man of Hearst and the Liberty League. His program is their program, despite the flowery cloak of "liberalism" with which the publicity men have clothed the Kansas Coolidge. Three facts which broke through the liberal camouflage of the Convention show how true this is. T. E. Weir, the most belligerent open-shopper in the country and an important Liberty Leaguer, was a member of the platform committee. Secondly, it is known that Aldrich, head of the Chase National Bank and spokesman for the Rockefeller interests, dictated the monetary section of Landon's platform, if not all of it. Thirdly, the platform which the Landon forces brought to Cleveland was even more reactionary than the one adopted by the Convention. For example, Landon's original platform proposed to balance the budget within a year, which would have meant cutting off all relief almost immediately.

The ultra-reactionary groups will use the campaign as a means of strengthening their grip on the economic and political life of the country and of preparing the ground for even more severe attacks upon the living standards and democratic rights of the overwhelming majority of the American people. They are concentrating on the

Congressional elections so as to be able to increase their future pressure on Roosevelt. And in the event of a victory for Landon, they would speed up their reactionary drive and carry out their program with the same directness and brutality that Hearst and the vigilantes used against the San Francisco general strike, or Hoover when he drove the bonus marchers out of Washington.

The Republican Party and its Liberty League sponsors are apparently planning to wage their campaign along the following lines: They will attack the Roosevelt administration for extravagant expenditures and "boondoggling", which they claim are leading to oppressive taxes and the danger of inflation. The Republicans will lay the blame for the heavy tax burden on the "boondoggling" of the administration to attract votes from farmers and middle-class people who are in danger of losing homes and farms to the tax collectors. J. P. Morgan, who paid no income taxes during the crisis years, has set the tone for this attack by deploring the Roosevelt "spending orgy". Last year he said that "anybody who makes any money in the United States actually is working eight months of the year for the government, and who is going to be able to or will do that indefinitely?"

To win the youth, the Republicans attack the administration for burdening future generations with an increasing national debt. In the same breath they appeal to the unemployed by promising "more relief to the destitute at less cost to the taxpayers" and the privilege "to work again as free men and not languish as vote-slaves, nor as slaves of the dole".

The Republicans will attempt to hide the fascist direction of their Liberty League sponsors by attacking the New Deal as an "alien" attempt to undermine the Constitution and institute a "socialistic and fascistic" dictatorship. At the Convention, Keynoter Steiwer attacked the administration as "alien and European" and accused Roosevelt of using "the tactics of the Soviet Union". The next day Hoover, who gave the real line of the Convention, called the New Deal "fascism" and called for "a holy crusade for freedom". Just as Hitler came to power with promises of "freedom and socialism", so do the fascist-minded men behind Landon proclaim themselves "the defenders of liberty" and the enemies of fascism. Behind their cry for the defense of freedom is their real purpose—their determination to be free to plunder and oppress the American people.

To meet the Republican attack Roosevelt will use improved business conditions as one of his main campaign arguments, glossing over the features of mass unemployment and low living standards. He will probably continue his verbal attacks against "entrenched greed", and he certainly will attack the link between the Republican

candidate and the Hearst-Liberty League alliance. But he will, unless stopped by mass pressure, continue to retreat before the fire of the reactionaries just as he has already cut relief to weaken their attack on the unbalanced budget. Acting on the belief that he has the liberal and labor vote in the bag, Roosevelt will avoid taking a stand on controversial issues. Apparently, he believes that he can win the election if he maintains his present mass following. He will not take any chances with issues such as the Constitution and the Supreme Court which he thinks the Republicans could use to stampede the middle classes into their camp.

LANDON BACKED BY THE MOST DECISIVE SECTIONS
OF FINANCE CAPITAL

There is one factor in the current situation which will be felt more and more as the campaign progresses. The weight of the most decisive sections of finance capital is today lined up almost solidly against Roosevelt. Even the Rockefeller group, which was friendly to the administration at the beginning of the New Deal, has deserted and has been working for Landon since he was drafted by Hearst.

The biggest banks and monopolies have formulated definite political programs, have openly organized their forces for the crucial elections, and will spend enormous amounts of money to buy a victory for Landon. Big business is showing its hand more openly this year than in any election since the defeat of Bryan in 1896. Last November a large group of powerful manufacturers and bankers came out strongly for the defeat of Roosevelt, and no doubt put up the money which made a candidate out of Landon. For months the various employers' associations have been "ganging up" against the administration. They will spare no money and use every trick to put Landon in office.

The campaign against Roosevelt was carefully organized. Last December the National Association of Manufacturers declared that "industry in self defense has been forced to enter the political arena". Their hypocritical statement about self defense should not be allowed to cover up their declaration of war against the American people, the opening phase of which is the campaign for Landon.

The Republican platform was not written by the men who make up the liberal face of Landon. Its demagogic aspects are merely vote-catching devices which hide its essentially reactionary character. It was modeled after the platform adopted by the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the American Bankers Association, the Liberty League, and the editorials in the Hearst press.

The program of these reactionary groups wishes to shift even more of the burdens of the crisis onto the people. To accomplish this, the big bankers and industrialists are determined to destroy the labor movement, to abolish relief, to wipe out every concession made by Roosevelt to the workers and farmers, to undermine the democratic rights of the people, and to establish a fascist dictatorship which will throw its weight on the side of the war-makers in the world arena.

These sinister aims emerge clearly from the various programs and platforms adopted by the employers' associations. The National Association of Manufacturers came out brazenly for the end of all federal relief and for scrapping the W.P.A. program. "Direct relief, although necessary, is no cure for this unemployment, and the Public Works Relief Program is a demonstrated failure. The only solution for unemployment is re-employment through the revival of private enterprise."

The employers use the existence of the huge army of unemployed to attack the administration and to win the support of those who are dissatisfied with the low standards of relief for the Republican candidate. They propose to let the unemployed starve by dumping them back on the bankrupt states and municipalities. An example of what the reactionaries plan for all the unemployed is the present critical situation in New Jersey where a basket of groceries is once again the standard of relief. Despite their promises, the manufacturers have no intention of re-employing the jobless, the majority of whom they admit will never get jobs again. The capitalists are actually adding to the number of unemployed by lengthening the work week, increasing speed-up, and introducing machines which throw workers out of jobs. Thus, the official spokesman for the Ford Motor Company has again and again made the point that the manufacturers cannot and will not take back the overwhelming majority of the jobless.

The Liberty League presented a twelve-point program to the last Congress which followed the same lines laid down by the National Association of Manufacturers. They proposed to balance the budget by cutting relief expenditures and throwing the unemployed back to charity and the poorhouse. They urged the repeal of all legislation like the Wagner Bill, the Guffey Bill, and other laws which gave the workers a few concessions. The largest part of this program was carried out by the Supreme Court, which denied Congress the right to give aid to any distressed section of the population. By retreating before their criticism, Roosevelt moved in their direction, and emboldened them to make even greater attacks upon the working people.

The offensive against civil liberties and workers' rights has been pushed at the prompting of the United States Chamber of Commerce. They are responsible for the gag and loyalty bills which have been rushed through the legislatures. Their lobbyists drew up the repressive measures against the workers which were up in Congress with the open support of high army and navy officials. Their aim is expressed in the M-Day Plan of the War Department which will conscript labor and set up a dictatorship the moment future hostilities begin.

That the reactionaries are moving towards fascism should be clear to all who have watched the political scene during the past few years. The tactics which they have evolved flow from the very measures which Roosevelt undertook with their support in 1933 to save American capitalism. The New Deal gave certain concessions to the workers; but its real achievements were to strengthen the trusts, raise monopoly prices, increase profits, and keep the workers in check with extravagant promises which were never kept. Big business used the New Deal to consolidate its position. But once their profits had been restored, the big capitalists broke with Roosevelt because he would not tone down his social demagoguery which, according to them, helped stimulate the militant strikes and other actions of the working class. From the start, Roosevelt tried to mollify them; he arranged his famous truce with the American Bankers Association; he promised a "breathing spell"; but as Roosevelt gave way before their attacks, the active opposition of the reactionary monopolists grew stronger. They blamed Roosevelt for the very actions which he had undertaken in their behalf and in this way attempted to divert the resentment of the working people, who were disillusioned with the New Deal, into reactionary channels.

Thus, a great deal of the campaign will center around the question as to whether the New Deal impeded recovery. Reactionary organizations will disregard the billions which Roosevelt poured out to the banks and insurance companies. They will disregard their manifold increase in profits. Instead, they will direct attention to the failure of production to reach the level of 1929 and the persistence of mass unemployment. We must remember, however, that when Roosevelt took office the big bourgeoisie as a whole supported his administration and the initial steps of the New Deal. J. P. Morgan publicly supported Roosevelt when he took the United States off the gold standard. The administration set up a council of 52 important industrialists and bankers which shaped New Deal legislation and dictated the N.R.A. codes. The N.R.A. was hailed by both the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National

Association of Manufacturers for freezing monopoly prices and abolishing the antiquated anti-trust legislation.

The big capitalists broke with Roosevelt only when the N.R.A. had outlived its usefulness, only when they decided that the time was ripe for more open methods of assault to keep the workers in line. After they had gotten everything they wanted from the New Deal, they accused Roosevelt of being "socialistic", to confuse the working people by tarring socialism with the failures of the New Deal. This enabled them to dissociate themselves from the administration and to cover up the enormous gains which it had brought them.

The biggest monopolies, which used the codes to smash their small competitors, suddenly were converted into advocates of economic freedom. They made the claim that the administration had promoted monopoly and prevented recovery by its "socialistic" methods. In the words of the National Association of Manufacturers, "the revival is being prevented by a persistent departure from the principles of social and economic organization upon which American progress, prosperity and civilization had been built".

Following the lead given them by the reactionaries, the Republicans have accused the New Deal of "setting up governmental corporations and agencies in direct competition with private business, thus spreading fear, hampering industry and adding to unemployment". The present upturn, according to the Republicans, has come in spite of the "subversive" policies of the government. They attribute the rise in business activity to the action of the Supreme Court in destroying the N.R.A. and the A.A.A. This is the chief point made by Herbert Hoover, who said that "since those Supreme Court decisions, the nation is showing some hopeful signs of progress". In actuality, big business was tided over the worst phase of the crisis by R.F.C. loans, and a large part of the current upturn can be traced to pump-priming expenditures by the government.

The hostility of the decisive sections of the capitalist class to Roosevelt is more bitter than any attack leveled at a president in office since the days of Jackson. They have not hesitated to accuse him of being a Socialist, Communist, fascist, a dictator, etc. The Morgan-controlled National City Bank has even accused him of lifting his program from *The Communist Manifesto*, and the Republicans have charged him with importing foreign and seditious principles. This bitter feeling is a reflection of the decay of American capitalism, of the determination by the biggest capitalists to preserve their rule by fascist means. They fear that Roosevelt's concessions, weak as they are, undermine the front of monopoly capital.

This hatred of Roosevelt is to be seen in the following letter which was sent by a du Pont executive in the spring of 1934 to John

J. Raskob, spokesman for the du Pont interests and an active organizer for the Liberty League:

"Many thousands of men are leaving employment to accept easy jobs with the government, paid for with the taxpayers' money under the guise of relief. . . . Many trades are on strike, being encouraged from Washington, and these same strikers are employed by the government and paid with the taxpayers' money. . . . Why should a man of Roosevelt's education and birth, if honest in his convictions, or honest in his endeavors to bring back prosperity, carry on a campaign of labor against capital, and a campaign to eliminate wealth?"

Raskob replied with a letter urging big business to fight the New Deal and to "come out openly with some plan for educating the people to the value of encouraging people to work; showing the fallacy of Communism in its efforts to tear down our capital structure, etc.". He said that the du Pont group, of all the financial oligarchies, was the one best suited to undertake the job. A few months after this exchange of letters, the misnamed American Liberty League was launched with du Pont money and quickly became the active center of organized reaction in this country.

The opposition to Roosevelt is concentrated in the fascist-minded Liberty League which is sponsored and financed by the Morgan-du Pont interests, the most powerful group of monopolists in the country. Around them are grouped the most important capitalists and bankers, the magnates of steel, auto, munitions, chemicals, railroads, public utilities, oil, meat packing, etc. It is estimated by conservative sources that the Liberty Leaguers control at least half of the corporate wealth of the country, which gives some idea of the unlimited power and financial backing behind the drive of reaction. Senate investigations have shown that the Liberty Leaguers have subsidized and encouraged every labor-hating, Jew-baiting, and anti-Negro group in the country. They backed Talmadge and his Ku Klux "grass-roots" movement. They are manipulating Coughlin and every other fascist demagogue who aspires to be the American Hitler. With Hearst as their ballyhoo artist, they have blanketed the country with their dogmas of hate against the labor movement and everything that is progressive. The Black Legion killers are the inevitable products of their campaign of hate and Red-baiting.

These are the men who picked Landon and Knox. They are the worst exponents of terror against strikers. They are the men who maintain the infamous labor spy system. They are the open-shoppers who have herded millions of workers into company unions. They are the handful of men who control the two hundred big corporations which own and rule America.

The entire convention of the Republican Party bore the Liberty

League stamp and stank with the smell of Hearst. The platform which was adopted after 45 seconds of discussion is modeled very closely after the platforms of the Liberty League and the employers' associations which we have just discussed. It is traditional in the United States that the platforms of the two old capitalist parties never mean very much in the sense that the planks which are adopted are usually never carried out. Although the Republicans make a good deal of the failure of Roosevelt to carry out his platform promises, no candidate ever does, and it is routine flub-dub for the "outs" to accuse the "ins" of failing to fulfill campaign pledges. The real platform which is not revealed to the voters is drawn up by the big bankers and industrialists before the political convention takes place, and is kept as an after-election surprise for the voters. This year the platforms adopted by the two old capitalist parties have more importance, because they indicate to some extent the trends which will be followed.

The Republican platform is a program of attack upon the living standards and liberties of the overwhelming majority of the American people. It is a program to strengthen reaction, to strengthen the dictatorial powers of the Supreme Court, to speed up the drive towards fascism. It promises everything to everyone: "social security", "farm relief", "collective bargaining", "lower taxes", "adequate relief". With these promises, which they have no intention of ever fulfilling, Hearst and the Liberty Leaguers have trotted out a "rejuvenated" party. Their slogan is: Main Street, not Wall Street. But the Republican Party does not have "new grass roots"; its roots and its financial nourishment are in Wall Street. It is the ballyhoo which has been changed, to enable Landon, in the words of the *Wall Street Journal*, to be as "conservative and as radical as the heart of America". A high-powered sales campaign, under the skillful direction of Bruce Barton, one of the highest paid press agents in the country, is now under way to sell the Republican Party, as the champion of freedom, and to palm off Landon as a homey but profound statesman. From his Kansas back porch the Republican dummy will echo the speeches of the Wall Street ventriloquists, and will make such profound contributions as "our platform must say exactly what we mean, and we must mean exactly what our platform says".

REPUBLICAN CONVENTION ORATORY

Despite the best organized press in the history of the country, the Republicans found it difficult to whip up enthusiasm at the convention. The machine ground out the attacks against the New Deal, concocted the platform, and nominated Landon with listless efficiency. It is significant that the only one who stirred the convention was Herbert Hoover. He sounded the real keynote with his attack

against "the socialist march" of the New Deal, and his plea to the reactionaries that they "stop the retreat". The delegates were really honest when they cheered his plea for a return to the policies of Hooverism, which meant no relief for the unemployed, mass deportation of the foreign-born, and those other features of the Old Deal which the American people voted against in 1932. Hoover piously proclaimed that "there is something vastly bigger than payrolls, than economics, than materialism, at issue in this campaign". Hitler gives the German people "honor" instead of bread; Hoover and the Republicans would give the American people "frugality, courage and decency" instead of a living wage.

The other speakers at the convention, including the keynoter, were only bad imitations of Hoover. They squeezed the American eagle for all it was worth, and again and again they viciously attacked the foreign-born, upon whom were blamed the crime wave, unemployment, and the "un-American" policies of the New Deal. Steiwer followed Hearst in his best Red-baiting style when he attacked the administration for "coddling agitators and encouraging purveyors of unrest at a time when the nation needs a firm and dignified leadership". The fascists in Italy and Germany claimed that the solution for the chaos of capitalism was "firmness" and "leadership". The results of that firmness are to be seen in the hundreds of thousands of anti-fascists who have been tortured and imprisoned by Mussolini and Hitler. That is the kind of leadership the Liberty Leaguers want.

When the convention orators were not attacking "subversive influences", they were making overt efforts to bribe Democrats to vote for Landon. Snell, the chairman of the Convention and Republican leader in the House of Representatives, made a bid for anti-administration Democrats to join in the crusade against Roosevelt by promising them jobs: "We shall need in executive positions the services of constitutional Democrats and Republicans alike." In addition to these crude methods, the reactionaries are trying to get votes by proclaiming a political crusade "high above the plane of party politics". This is a favorite reactionary trick; to pose as a national coalition representing the interests of the people.

For all its liberal trimmings, the platform in itself exposed the real aims of the Republican Party and its reactionary allies. Instead of lightening the burden of taxation, the platform came out for "a direct tax widely distributed", in other words, for the sales tax which Hearst advocates daily in his newspapers. On the question of relief, the platform urged "the return of responsibility for relief administration to non-political local agencies familiar with community problems". This means giving up the present inadequate

system of federal relief and leaving the unemployed to starve on the doorsteps of the local poorhouse. The W.P.A. program and all public works are to be scrapped. The platform came out for public works which pass "on their merits". Everyone knows how this merit clause was applied during the Hoover administration. It means no works program at all.

The platform is against social insurance. The main reliance against insecurity is placed on "the character of our people and the system of free enterprise". There is a vague promise about "the obligation to promote the security of the people by affording some measure of protection against involuntary unemployment and dependency in old age". By throwing the burden on the states and by advocating "a pay-as-you-go policy", the platform throws all social insurance legislation out of the window. Its one purpose is to catch votes by making a gesture in the direction of the Townsendsites.

Those who have been without jobs for seven years can find this solace in the platform: "The only permanent solution of the unemployment problem is the absorption of the unemployed by industry and agriculture." This is to be done by cutting relief and by giving "encouragement instead of hindrance to legitimate business".

The labor section is especially interesting, since we know that it was written by the notorious Weir, who led the drive against the unions in the steel industry in 1933 and 1934. It states that the Republicans will "protect the rights of labor to organize and to bargain collectively through representatives of its own choosing without interference from any source". The joker is contained in the last phrase. By attacking "interference from any source", the employers can prevent union organization on the ground of coercion. The plank would legalize company unions and the open shop. It is so bad that even *The New York Times* pointed out that "the interference of certain corporations through company unions is ignored".

The platform speaks vaguely of the farm problem as "an economic and social, and not a partisan problem". But it does little more than re-phrase Roosevelt's so-called soil conservation act, which favors the rich farmer at the expense of the poor one, and denies all relief to tenants and sharecroppers. The one new wrinkle which the Republican platform has is a clause favoring "the promotion of the industrial use of farm products by applied science", a pet scheme of Ford and the du Ponts to manufacture synthetic chemicals and other products from crops like soy beans, as part of their monopolistic penetration of agriculture.

To placate the anti-monopoly feeling of the farmers in the Mid-West, the platform stated that "monopoly is indefensible and intolerable". It pledged the Republicans "to employ the full powers

of the government to the end that monopoly shall be eliminated". This is a case of the trusts writing a trust-busting plank. It will frighten no one in Wall Street. It is an empty threat very similar to the threats made by Hitler and the Nazis against "the international bankers". It will be carried out with the same zero degree of effectiveness.

On the crucial question of curbing the dictatorial powers of the judiciary, the platform whitewashed the usurped powers of the courts and came out flatly against "all attempts to impair the authority of the Supreme Court of the United States". The platform denied that a constitutional amendment was necessary for social legislation. To catch both sides, Landon sent a message to the convention, in which he urged an amendment giving the states the right to pass laws on minimum wages and maximum hours for women, although the Supreme Court has denied both the states and the federal government authority to do so. Landon's proposal is an attempt to spike the growing movement to curb the powers of the Supreme Court. An amendment giving only the states the right to enact social legislation would play right into the hands of the reactionaries. It would leave the workers at the mercy of forty-eight legislatures and state constitutions, and would sabotage any real struggle to smash the judicial dictatorship.

All fourteen planks in the Republican platform are of a double-dealing nature. On the surface they promise everything to everyone. A closer reading reveals that the Republicans have merely rewritten in "liberal" language the doctrines and programs of the Liberty League and the employers' associations.

A victory for the reactionary gang, which has picked Landon and Knox, would mean more loot for the monopolies at the expense of the poor. It would mean the end of relief. It would mean more severe attacks upon working conditions and wages. It would mean a greater drive against the labor unions. It would mean further encroachments upon the democratic rights and civil liberties of the people. It would strengthen the dictatorial powers of the Supreme Court. It would open up the road to a fascist dictatorship.

The main enemy of the American people today is this Landon-Liberty League-Hearst alliance. They represent the threat of incipient fascism. They are the immediate enemies of the American people who must be defeated if we are not to be herded into concentration camps and forced to goose-step to the tune piped by Hearst.

ROOSEVELT RETREATS BEFORE REACTION

In the face of this concentrated attack, which will grow stronger

as the campaign develops, Roosevelt has retreated. He declares one truce after the other. Recently, he has held secret sessions with important capitalists like Chrysler, Baruch, and Owen D. Young. This shows that he is trying to make new truces with the reactionaries, at a time when reaction can only be defeated by the sternest measures. Roosevelt will not stop the drive towards fascism. The New Deal sought to save and strengthen American capitalism. Its reform program was an attempt to correct a few of the most glaring abuses of capitalism in order to restore the weakened faith of the American people in capitalist rule. The class aims of Roosevelt were and are the same as those of his Right opponents. He has been trying to bring about recovery for the capitalist class. He does not differ with the reactionaries as to fundamental aims; he wishes only to use slightly softer methods and policies. Roosevelt continually tries to conciliate the reactionaries in the Liberty League and, in his retreat, makes concessions to them at the cost of the welfare of the American people.

Although the most decisive sections of finance capitalism are backing Landon, there are still important capitalists who support and finance Roosevelt. These include A. P. Giannini, the California banker, who, in alliance with Hearst, leads the fight against the labor movement on the West Coast. Then there are capitalists like Chrysler; Crouch, the Southwestern utilities magnate; Jesse Jones, the big Texas real estate operator and oil magnate, who is now head of the R.F.C.; Eccles, the wealthy Western banker who was appointed head of the Federal Reserve Board by Roosevelt; Gerard Swope, head of the Morgan-controlled General Electric Company, who was the brains behind the N.R.A. program; and liberal capitalists like Filene, the department store magnate, and J. David Stern, the wealthy publisher, who fear that the Liberty League opposition to Roosevelt will strengthen the radical forces among the masses and who wish to use the Roosevelt administration as a lightning rod to draw off the anger and resentment of the working people.

In addition, Roosevelt has wide support among secondary capitalist groups such as the Southern landlords and certain Mid-Western manufacturers who have benefited in one or another respect from the New Deal. Then there are capitalists who are tied up with the local Democratic machines in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Chicago, Boston, etc. These include men like Governor Lehman of New York, Governor Earle, of Pennsylvania, and many big contractors and real estate operators. And since the biggest capitalists still keep their tentacles in the Democratic Party, we find individual members of the House of Morgan like Leffingwell and Parker, endorsing the banking and credit policy of the administration, and the

Democratic partners voting for him. All of this shows that Roosevelt still has many connections with big business, that his program is in all respects a capitalist program and that his policies are trimmed to suit the wishes of his capitalist supporters.

This explains why Roosevelt has met the attacks of the reactionaries with speeches which *The New York Times* describes as "conciliatory and not at all disturbing". The Secretary of Commerce, Daniel C. Roper, his contact man with big business, has repeatedly stressed the willingness of the government to cooperate with the big bankers and industrialists. While Ickes and Tugwell make speeches to labor and the middle classes, Roper tells business men that "in our country increased re-employment must come as a result of general and just profits". That this is the real line of the administration is proved by its consistent policy of putting profits above relief and human needs.

Since this is being written before the Democratic convention takes place in Philadelphia, we cannot analyze the specific details of Roosevelt's campaign strategy. While retreating, he has been compelled to make speeches against reaction and even grant some minor concessions to the workers and farmers. But fundamentally, the Roosevelt policy is to arrange a truce with the reactionaries, preferably before the elections, and certainly after them. Hence, it seems very likely that he will continue his tactics of the past year and hedge on all vital issues, such as curbing the Supreme Court. In his Jackson Day speech, Roosevelt did not attack the autocrats on the bench although they had just dismembered the A.A.A. He spoke vaguely about "the retention of popular government" as the main issue in the Presidential campaign. This has a great deal of vote-getting appeal, but it does not meet the real issues before the American people.

The Supreme Court has made one attack after another upon the liberties and economic conditions of the masses. Yet the administration has remained passive and Roosevelt has done nothing more drastic than promise to study the decisions. The result of his study is to be found in his recent statement that it is not necessary to bring all issues before the Supreme Court. He cited the action of Jefferson, who did not take the question of the Louisiana Purchase before the judges. He is implying that he has found a way of challenging the courts, but in reality this is nothing but a clever dodge. Roosevelt and Congress had and have the right to curb the Court at any time by increasing the number of justices, by enacting a law denying the Court jurisdiction over social and labor legislation, or by initiating the move for a constitutional amendment curbing its usurped powers. By evading these direct methods which can be undertaken at any

time, Roosevelt shows that he will do nothing unless forced to take action by mass pressure.

That this is the line which Roosevelt will follow is indicated by the speeches and writings of Raymond Moley, former brain-truster, who still has considerable influence with him. Moley has declared that the best tactic for Roosevelt, if he is to be re-elected, is "to make as many concessions as he can to the business sentiment of the country; that is, to extend the breathing spell". Although Roosevelt has not openly declared his agreement with Moley on this point, his policies show that he is doing precisely what Moley advises him to do.

In his tour across the South and Southwest during the week of the Republican Convention, Roosevelt cleverly used this opportunity to reply to their platform. Roosevelt reinterpreted American history in terms of present-day problems and identified himself with the pioneers, the frontier, Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln. But he was very indefinite as to how he would play the role of a modern Jefferson or Lincoln. He urged the American people to turn away "from the stagnant marshes of a seaboard oligarchy into the channels of pure American democracy", and to fight against the concentration of "control in the hands of a few, powerful groups". His speeches contained no concrete attack for these problems. And his conclusion was merely that we "seek a new approach when old approaches fail", without specifying what that new approach must be.

This shows that to rely on Roosevelt, to give him a blank check, is to give him more opportunities for retreats and maneuvers and for new "breathing spells" in the interest of the reactionaries. Unfortunately, the progressive wing in the A. F. of L., which is in Labor's Non-Partisan League, is following just this policy of depending on Roosevelt to defeat the sinister aims of Landon, Hearst and the Liberty Leaguers. They have broken with the traditional "non-partisan" attitude of the A. F. of L., which, as practiced by the Executive Council in this election campaign, means capitulation to reaction. Yet the leaders of the Non-Partisan Labor League, by completely subordinating the trade unions to Roosevelt, hold back the historically necessary separation of the working class from the two old capitalist parties.

It seems a foregone conclusion that the overwhelming majority of trade unionists will vote for Roosevelt. Even the Republicans seem to take this for granted, and their platform made no special attempt to direct phrases at the organized labor movement. A few reactionaries, like Hutcheson of the Carpenters Union, may come out openly for Landon but, in the main, they will do most of their work under cover. Whatever pose the Executive Council may strike, its real aims were exposed when William Green crawled before the

Republican platform committee, urged the deportation of the foreign-born, the breaking off of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, and spoke against an amendment to the Constitution limiting the powers of the Supreme Court, in direct violation of the last A. F. of L. Convention decisions. This action of Green and the reactionaries on the Executive Council once again proves that their "non-partisan" policy is in reality a partisan policy in the interests of the open-shoppers and the worst enemies of the workers.

WHAT OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY?

In this situation, the Socialist Party plays a sectarian role. Its refusal to collaborate in the building of a national Farmer-Labor Party helped make the trade unions a tail to the Roosevelt kite. The Socialist Party took a step forward at its national convention when it defeated the Old Guard; but the keynote speeches and the compromise platform which was adopted were a back-sliding into sectarianism.

The convention and the platform underestimated the menace of reaction and directed their main attack against Roosevelt. Behind this is the notion advanced by Norman Thomas that "those who want reforms . . . should stick to the Roosevelt administration". Now, if Roosevelt is the best that the workers can get under capitalism, then it follows from the statement of Thomas that the workers must give up their fight for immediate demands and wait for socialism to grant them. Basing itself on this confused idea, the Socialist Party makes its major appeal around the word "socialism", but it is a socialism without the socialist revolution, just as the Socialist Party tilts at fascism in the abstract, without attacking the immediate menace of fascism represented by Hearst and the Liberty League. Because the Socialist Party does not realistically face the main issues before the American people, it attempts to cover up its ostrich-like attitude by shouting for socialism.

The original platform, which was drafted by a committee headed by Laidler, was an out-and-out reformist doctrine which was so bad that it was rejected by the convention. What was finally adopted (still subject to editorial revision by the National Executive Committee) was a bad compromise between the outright reformist platform originally submitted and the demands of the more "Leftist" and Trotskyist groups at the convention. The platform failed to distinguish between what can be achieved through fighting for immediate demands and what can be gotten only under socialism. The planks listing the immediate demands: amending the Constitution, the Frazier-Lundeen Bill, the American Youth Act, higher taxation on the rich and the big corporations, adequate relief, etc., are ones

which Communists can support and which in the past they have proposed joint action to win.

The basic weakness of the platform lies in its failure to tell the workers how they are going to achieve socialism and how they are going to create a new social order. Instead, the emphasis is laid on socialism in the abstract as a way out of all difficulties. The workers are not told that what is necessary today is a fight for their immediate needs in order to beat back reaction. Through organizing the workers around such issues, the Communist Party is educating and preparing them for the time when they will destroy capitalism and establish socialism. The Communist Party has attacked the idea put forward by Norman Thomas that the immediate needs of the workers cannot be obtained short of a socialist society. On the contrary, not only can these demands be won, as the successes of the French working class show, but the workers can be won for socialism only if their immediate aims are fought for.

The platform of the Socialist Party and the writings of Norman Thomas show that in this election campaign, behind their cry of "socialism", they look upon themselves as a substitute for a mass Farmer-Labor Party. Thomas attacked the program adopted by the Chicago Conference for a Farmer-Labor Party, because he thinks its program is in competition with his own platform and hence he claims there is "a much better program in the Socialist platform". But if Norman Thomas pursued a revolutionary line such as the Communist Party does, he would not think of comparing the limited program of a Farmer-Labor Party with the program of a truly revolutionary working class party.

The reformist bias of Thomas came out strongly in an interview which he granted *The New York Times*. There he spoke of Roosevelt as having "adopted and adapted some socialist ideas", which not only contradicts his attacks on the New Deal for not being socialism, but makes of the concessions granted by Roosevelt to the workers and farmers "socialistic reforms". He closed his interview with this revelation of his true attitude:

"In this country we want no dictatorship, we want no revolution, there are ample constitutional ways of bringing about the change [to socialism] in a peaceful and legal manner."

This is not only the classical reformist approach to the problem of the seizure of power by the working class, but it is the basis of the failure by Thomas to understand the need for the struggle for immediate demands and its ultimate transformation on a higher plane into the struggle for socialism.

Because Thomas sees himself as competing with Roosevelt for

the liberal vote, he directs his main fire against him, and completely closes his eyes to the menace of reaction and fascism represented by the Republican Party, Hearst and the Liberty League. To him the Republicans wrote not a platform which is to open the way to fascism but "a platform for the nineteenth century". His whole emphasis is upon fascism as a danger only in the remote future. Thus, he said in one of his columns that "there will be a real danger from fascism" only when the capitalists discover that "they can't check the disintegration of capitalism". In the meantime, the Landon-Hearst-Liberty League alliance does not signify "such black reaction as certain hysterical supporters of Roosevelt have assumed". To underestimate the immediate danger which Landon-Hearst and the Liberty Leaguers represent to the American people, to place the struggle against fascism in some vague future, to substitute for a real struggle against fascism some confused phrases about socialism, means indirectly to aid the election of Landon and to weaken that understanding and unity of the masses which are necessary if reaction is to be defeated.

As against this sectarian view, the Communist Party at its Ninth National Convention will put forward as its main goal in the election campaign the struggle for the unity of the working class, the unity of all toilers, the building of a powerful Farmer-Labor Party. As against this underestimation of the menace of reaction and fascism, the Communist Party will tell the American people that the main danger confronting them today is the line-up of Landon, Hearst and the Liberty League. The Communist Party will prove that the whole record of Roosevelt shows that he is no barrier against reaction or the advance of fascism. It will call upon the American people to unite their ranks and conduct independent political struggles against the reactionaries. The Communist Party in its election campaign will do its utmost to help the American working class break from the bondage of the two old capitalist parties. It will utilize the campaign around its own candidate to further the class aims of the American working class, and help build a Farmer-Labor Party, a people's front against reaction, fascism and war.

The People's Front Strikes from the Shoulder

By V. J. JEROME

THE People's Front has caught the ear of the world.

The events in France, the great election successes of the Popular Front, the formation of the government supported by the Left forces, and the titanic strike wave bringing swift victory to the French workers in the first test to which the new government has been put, have won for the People's Front a place in every language of the world.

What was but yesterday a project, a tactic newly devised, an organization freshly forming, is now an army on the march, with successes attending its every encounter.

And as the interest in that great movement is aroused, eagerness grows on all sides for an understanding of the issues involved and the principles upon which it is founded.

What is the People's Front? What accounts for its sudden emergence in the conflict of class forces? Why is it, in varying forms, coming to the fore throughout the capitalist and colonial world? What connection has it with the movement for forming the Farmer-Labor Party in the United States?

We must learn to see this new battlefield against reaction as an outcome of the specific period that brings it upon the scene of events. We must see it in relation to current changes in the interplay of social forces on the world arena.

WHY THE PEOPLE'S FRONT?

The struggle between the victorious socialist world and the declining world of capitalism has reached a new stage. Sharpened imperialist antagonisms have brought about shifting lineups among the bourgeois state blocs. Internal divisions among ruling class groups within each capitalist country are increasing as the struggle for diminishing profits becomes more acute. The class war gathers scope and momentum and is increasingly directed against the very rule of capital. The ruling class is carrying on an offensive to achieve a new, terrorist form of dictatorship. And the two basic classes struggle to win over the poor and middle farmers, the intermediary classes of the cities; the one as a social base for fascism, insecurity, and war; the other as an ally for freedom, abundance, and security.

The advance of the People's Front proceeds at a time when

world capitalism finds itself in a blind alley. Having passed the lowest point of its economic crisis—the longest and most devastating in its entire history—the capitalist system is unable to effect the transition to a new general period of “prosperity”. Unlike the previous depressions, the present one is, as Stalin termed it, “a depression of a special kind”; for the general crisis of capitalism, which began with the outbreak of the World War, prevents the internal forces of capitalism from restoring stabilization. The recent increase in industrial production, brought about to a great extent through intensive war preparations, is markedly irregular from country to country, as well as between industry and industry in any given country. Chronic unemployment has attached itself to the heart of the system. Vast human and material productive forces remain unused, systematically wasted and degraded. In the United States, in the past year, an increase of 30 per cent in industrial production brought about the return of only 9 per cent of the unemployed into industry,* leaving an unemployed army of 15,000,000.

This gap between the considerable rise in industrial production and the small increase in re-employment has but one meaning—that rationalization and speed-up drive those who work and keep the completely jobless outside the factory gates. It means that exploitation is increasing and working conditions are being beaten down. In the past six years the tax burden of the American people has been increased twofold, while that of the big corporations has been reduced by half. This means that the American living standards are being violently attacked, that the hands of greed are emptying the larders in workers' homes.

Shifting the whole burden of the crisis onto the backs of the laboring masses—such is the plan and practice of the ruling class in every capitalist land.

The advance of the People's Front proceeds in a period when, to forestall the revolutionary outcome of the workers' struggles, capitalism is increasingly adopting the barbarous dictatorship of fascism as its dominant political form. In a number of countries fascism has succeeded in attaining power. This could happen only because of the disunity and the unpreparedness of the proletariat, resulting from the class-collaboration policy of the Social-Democratic leaders. Particularly virulent is the Nazi brand of fascism, which is the chief inciting force in the drive to war and the maniacal expression of anti-Sovietism and of bourgeois counter-revolution. In every capitalist land today, with varying degrees and under various guises, fascism has launched its offensive. The Hearsts and the de la Rocques, the

* E. Varga, “Economics and Economic Policy in the Fourth Quarter of 1935,” *International Press Correspondence*, March 12, 1936.

Liberty Leagues and the Croix de Feu, the Black Legions and the Camelots du Roi, have their counterparts in all capitalist lands.

It is becoming increasingly apparent to the masses in these lands that their task in this hour is to stand firm and struggle to retain their hard-gained economic standards and democratic rights and to extend them. The growing consciousness of this task compels the masses to recognize and to single out for defeat the main enemy today, against whom all workers, all who toil in village or city, must direct their fire—the ultra-reactionary imperialist carriers of fascism and inciters to war: the two hundred reigning families in France, the Liberty League-Hearst-Landon clan in America.

The advance of the People's Front proceeds amid the intensified struggle of two worlds. The victories of the Second Five-Year Plan, guaranteeing the abolition of unemployment forever, have brought socialism to the town and countryside in the land of the Soviets, have given to the men, women, and children of the new society unparalleled economic, political, and cultural advantages. The draft of the new Soviet Constitution, extending still further the scope of proletarian democracy, affirms that it is the inalienable right of all toilers to work, to study, and to enjoy leisure. This Constitution is the triumphant expression of the fact that the main political aim of the Second Five-Year Plan, the building of the classless socialist society, is being successfully accomplished.

Socialist construction in the Soviet Union is exerting a tremendous influence on the masses in the crisis-ridden capitalist world. It is serving as a pillar of light to the toilers in their struggles against reaction. It is giving a powerful incentive to the movement toward socialism in every land.

The People's Front comes into being in the period of intensely heightened war danger. The imperialist bourgeoisie is impelled to increase its profits by seeking new territories for domination and new spheres of influence. Having greatly reduced the purchasing power of the masses and thus having brought about a shrinkage in its own profits, the capitalist class looks to war as the way out. Thus, there is proceeding a frantic race for armaments.

Intent upon bringing the entire Chinese people under its imperialist heel, Japan is dismembering the Chinese Republic. Japanese imperialism is intent upon destroying the Chinese Soviet regions, upon colonizing the Mongolian People's Republic, upon making war on the Soviet Union. Its rivalries with British and American imperialism in Asia, Australia, South America, and the Pacific, intensify the danger of war and open up a new theater for the outbreak of the imperialist world conflict.

In a war of aggression that is one of the most heinous in all history, the fascist imperialist state of Italy, adopting Japan's meth-

od in Manchuria, has subjected the last of the independent Negro nations. Thereby Italian imperialism has brought new complexities into the welter of imperialist antagonisms and has widened the base for new aggressions.

With the collapse of the Versailles system, and profiting from the conflicts between the victor imperialist powers, Germany is pursuing a policy of rearmament. It has remilitarized the Rhine. The Nazi regime is playing upon the national feelings of the German people, long under subjection to the Allied powers. It is fostering extreme chauvinist tendencies, whipping up a war frenzy in its design to annex Austria, Memel, Danzig, Czechoslovakia and sections of Poland, on the demagogic pretext of unifying the German people. But above all, the avowed and vaunted aim of the Nazi foreign policy is the "pressure to the East" (*Drang nach Osten*), which, in Hitler's own words, means an attack upon the Soviet Union. The alliance with Japan and the pact at this moment under negotiation with Mussolini are clearly motivated by this objective.

As against these principal war-incendiaries—the major fascist states—there are imperialist powers, like France and the United States, which, for their own imperialist reasons, are not, at this time, interested in joining the drive to war. They are, in regard to the war drive, status quo states. There are also weaker capitalist countries, like Czechoslovakia, which, standing in danger of being engulfed by fascist military aggressors, are opposed to war and constitute a force for peace.

But the bulwark of peace is the Soviet Union. Its peace policy, more than any other single factor, has retarded the outbreak of a new world war. Based on the economy of socialism, the Soviet foreign policy is intrinsically and openly opposed to the designs of imperialism, and is in consonance with the interests and basic aspirations of the toilers of the world. By its non-aggression pacts and its treaties for mutual assistance and defense, the Soviet government has been able to marshal among the status quo powers and smaller capitalist countries, notably France and Czechoslovakia, forces for collective security. By its resolute struggle for the principle of indivisible peace, the socialist state has become an inspiration to the laboring masses in their independent peace movements in all lands.

The advance of the People's Front proceeds in a period when the working class and the oppressed masses as a whole are steadily becoming disillusioned as to the capacity of the present system to offer a solution to their most vital problems. The laboring people are beginning to tear themselves loose from the moorings that have kept them bound all too long to the political parties of the bourgeoisie. From one side, the example of the Soviet Union serves increasingly to inspire the masses in the capitalist world to a growing

admiration of the fortress of socialism and peace. From the other, the Nazi rise to power in Germany and the terrific setback to the German working class have brought home a tremendous lesson to the workers everywhere—the lesson of the need for unity.

Furthermore, the bankruptcy of fascist ideology and the manifest deceptions of its program are disillusioning larger and larger sections of the petty bourgeoisie, thereby causing the social base of fascism, actual and potential, to shrink from day to day. German fascism, particularly, by its unheard-of barbarities, has incurred the wrath of all progressive-minded people throughout the world, thus impeding the plans of the fascists the world over who look to Nazi Germany as their model and inspiration.

The advance of the People's Front proceeds in the wake of the glorious armed struggle of the Austrian Socialist and Communist workers. It has gathered strength from the valor of the Socialist, Communist, and Syndicalist workers of Asturias who rose in armed insurrection under the banner of Soviets. It received its impetus from the historic popular action of the Parisian masses in those momentous February days of 1934, which gave the clear signal that nowhere would the workers permit a repetition of Germany. These actions gave tangible evidence that the Social-Democratic workers, disillusioned as to bourgeois democracy, were undergoing a Left radicalization, which set them against class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. They began to turn against those leaders who, following the line of German reformist socialism, stood in the way of united proletarian action. Social-Democracy was in the throes of a crisis. Fascism's rejection of its further services to the bourgeoisie, and the growing movement of the Social-Democratic workers, as well as sections of the leadership, away from their reformist allegiance, greatly aggravated the disintegration of the Second International. Out of this crisis has come a definite turn in the ranks of the Social-Democratic workers toward the position of the class struggle.

The advance of the People's Front is proceeding in the period which witnessed the historic Seventh Congress of the Comintern—the Congress that advanced to the Communist Parties a new tactical line.

The Congress noted that the masses have been set in motion against the advance of reaction and are turning from the reformist leaders' policy of class collaboration to the policy of class struggle. But it also noted that a revolutionary situation is in the great majority of the countries not yet at hand. In quite a number of countries the working class has not yet resorted to independent political action in opposition to the influence of the bourgeoisie. Likewise, while the struggle against Old Guard Social-Democracy is proceeding throughout the Second International, the hold of the reformist leadership

has not yet been shaken off. Again, the vast majority of the Communist Parties have not yet gained for themselves that wide influence among the masses which is indispensable for the development of the struggle for Soviet power. Finally, the still prevailing lack of solid unity prevents the working class from advancing as leader of all the toiling masses and thus achieving the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

The Congress also noted that errors, mainly of a sectarian character, on the part of the Communists in various countries, held back the progress of the Communist Parties towards the extension of their Leninist mass policy. Particularly impeding was the tendency to apply the general line mechanically and in a stereotyped manner, with insufficient regard for specific national or local conditions and for the political level of the masses in a given stage of struggle.

The Congress therefore presented to the Parties the imperative of devising such forms of organization and such methods of work as are appropriate in the present period, for the purpose of coordinating and guiding the struggles of the masses in the direction of higher political attainments.

This momentous decision proceeded from the revolutionary Marxian teaching: "If the working class would retreat in its daily conflict with capital it would deprive itself of the possibility of undertaking any movement of greater scope."

It proceeded from the power-giving principle of Lenin: "Every form of struggle requires a corresponding tactic and apparatus."

The Congress of the Communist International hammered out for the world working class the mighty tactic of the united proletarian front—the steel backbone of the general People's Front.

THEORETICAL BASES OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

In the light of the foregoing analysis, the People's Front represents, in accordance with the needs of the present concrete period, the application of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on class struggle and the road to proletarian power.

The People's Front has come to life as an imperative tactic of the day for bringing nearer, through the continuous broadening of united action, the political unity of the proletariat; for winning the majority of the working class through day-to-day struggles to the banner of revolution; for realizing the historic class alliance between the proletariat and the middle strata of village and city; for promoting in that alliance the leadership of the proletariat; and for developing the Party of the proletariat into a mass party capable of exercising its role as vanguard of the revolutionary class.

It becomes necessary at the outset to clear the road of the barrage of arguments advanced from all sides by opponents of the People's

Front. In enhancing its tactical strength, the proletariat has always encountered the necessity of overcoming obstacles placed in its path by spurious friends and well wishers. As in the past, so now the working class must be on guard against guides and counselors that are in essence, whether through confusion or design, carriers of enemy class ideas.

Let us examine what the opponents of the People's Front have to say.

We begin with the position of the Old Guard Socialists, the bulwark of resistance to the united front. As class-collaborationists, they look with alarm upon the Left currents in Social-Democracy and attempt to set up dams against them with warnings of "Communist treachery". Beware, they say, of the Communists who are merely decoying you from the road of democracy to accepting the dictatorship of the proletariat. A typical presentation of that position is to be found in the *New Leader* for May 23, in an article by John Powers. Powers writes of the People's Front:

"It is in no way original, being simply the application in French politics of the method used so successfully for the same purpose by the Socialists, Liberals and Democrats in other countries. What lent it peculiar interest in France was the adherence of the Communists, who discovered, on orders from Moscow, that it would be to the advantage of the Stalin dictatorship in the Kremlin, joined to France in a military alliance, to help promote a victory for the Democratic Parties in the election."

Let us remember, in the first place, who these men are that utter such words today. They are blood brothers of those very Social-Democratic leaders, the Otto Welses and the Stampfers, who, by their rejection of the proletarian united front for unity with the bourgeoisie, bear the responsibility for Hitler's victory. They are brothers in treachery of the Social-Democratic Reichstag members who, on May 17, 1933, voted confidence in the Hitler regime.*

* Significant are the comments in the *New Leader* in connection with this incident. A minute examination of the files of the Socialist Party organ for that period brings forth not one single reference to the Social-Democratic pro-Hitler vote on May 17, 1933. The first direct reference was in the issue of June 17, obviously as a response no longer to be avoided to the challenge of reports in the revolutionary press. The reference was in the form of an anonymous article. We quote therefrom:

"It is a fact that 48 Social-Democratic members of the Reichstag out of 65 present decided in favor of a vote of confidence in Hitler. It is also a fact that very many German Social-Democrats regard this decision as a disgrace to the Party and a sign of surrender. . . . Roughly one-half of the 48 members have drawn . . . the conclusion that the Party had neglected nationalism too much and that therefore they must now lay emphasis on their nationalism. . . . The other half

They have not only never repudiated that policy of cowardice and treason, but, with the brazenness of the corrupt, they defend it and continue in its despicable tradition.

Compelled to recognize the People's Front as an accomplished fact with accomplished gains, these people now seek to credit the achievements of the People's Front to Social-Democracy and its traditional policy. They do this in the hope of directing this vast popular movement along the course that Social-Democracy charted for the German and Austrian toilers. Hence, they seek to blur the significance of the People's Front as a new tactic that represents a rejection of the traditional policy of Social-Democracy.

"... the method used so successfully for the same purpose by the Socialists, Liberals and Democrats in other countries."

So successfully for whom?—is the question.

The combination of German Social-Democracy with the liberals and democrats of the Weimar Constitution (and let us not forget those staunch democrats, the old monarchists!)* against the Communists, showed well enough who stands to profit from "the method used so successfully", *because, and always because, combination against the Communists is combination against the working class.* Not combination with the Communists, in the interests of the entire working class, against the Hunger Decrees of the Bruening dictatorship and its steady preparation of the conditions for Nazi rule, against the Hindenburg-Hitler stages of the fascist advance, but with the "lesser evil" against the united action of the working class which could have been consolidated in time to defeat the fascist offensive—that was "the method used so successfully"!

has succumbed to the Terror."

In the same issue of the *New Leader*, Norman Thomas, in his own unique way, said the following:

"We, like all Socialists throughout the world, utterly repudiate those Socialist members of the Reichstag who attended the last Hitler session and at least by silence [could he have been getting hard of hearing?] gave consent to his regime. It is true that Communist tactics have divided the forces of labor and weakened the opposition to fascism. . . ."

Communism, it would seem, was responsible for the craven-heartedness of the Social-Democratic deputies.

One can only ask: What, since the writing of those words, does Norman Thomas say to himself in remembering the Communist Dimitroff?

* In the course of a libel suit at Munich in November, 1925, General Groener, Chief of the Kaiserist General Staff during the Revolution of November, 1918, revealed: "Every day between 11 P.M. and 1 A.M. the staff of the High Command talked to Ebert [Social-Democratic President of Germany] on a special secret telephone. From November 10 our immediate object was to wrest power in Berlin out of the hands of the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."

And so it was in Austria. With fully a tenth of the country's population enrolled in the Socialist Party and with nearly three-quarters of Vienna's electorate Social-Democrat, "Left" Austro-Marxism nonetheless saw fit to turn its policy into support of one fascism against another, Dollfuss against Hitler—again on the basis of the "lesser evil".* And all the while, the Dollfuss government was visibly ushering in fascism. Decree laws were promulgated making arbitration compulsory, annulling collective agreements in public works, cutting wages on relief work, and reducing unemployment benefits. Confident of the continued support of the Austro-Marxist leadership, the government illegalized the Defense Corps, drove the Communist Party underground, and conducted systematic raids on workers' homes for weapons, at the same time that the Heimwehr was being fully equipped with arms.

In a statement that can best be characterized as a confession, Otto Bauer declared on March 8, 1934:

"But during the eleven months that we were trying to secure a peaceful *denouement*, the military strength of the government considerably increased, the Heimwehr was supplied with arms, and on the other hand, large sections of the working class—especially the railway men—were discouraged, crushed and robbed of their fighting spirit by the oppressive tactics of the government." **

And all along the Austrian workers were prepared to respond to the call for decisive class action *against the evil itself*, "lesser" or "greater", as they demonstrated in united ranks with such heroism in the battles of the February days. In a situation marked by elements of a revolutionary crisis, they were prepared—but for the decisive leaders and "the method used so successfully. . . ."

Is this the method of the People's Front?

First and foremost, the People's Front, as its name implies,

* The degradation to which the Austro-Marxist leadership dragged the name of Socialism is revealed in the following statement given to the capitalist press by Otto Bauer, and published in *The New York Times* of February 18, 1934, under the significant heading, "Dollfuss Spurned Socialists' Aid, Fugitive Party Leader Declares":

"We offered to make the greatest concessions that a Democratic and Socialistic Party had ever made. We let Dollfuss know that if he would only pass a bill through Parliament we would accept a measure authorizing the government to govern by decree without Parliament for two years, on two conditions only—that a small Parliamentary committee, in which the government had a majority, should be able to criticize decrees, and that a constitutional court, the only protection against breaches of the Constitution, should be restored. Dollfuss refused."

** "Tactical Lessons of the Austrian Catastrophe," *International Information*, bulletin of the Labor and Socialist (II) International, March 8, 1934.

means unity, the solid ranks of the masses brought together for common action on a common program against reaction, fascism, and the war drive. Let the following words from the closing speech of Comrade Dimitroff at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern present in concise utterance the fundamental task of the People's Front:

"Our Congress has set before the international proletariat as its most important immediate task that of consolidating its forces politically and organizationally, of putting an end to the isolation to which it had been reduced by the Social-Democratic policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of rallying the toilers around the working class in a wide people's front against the offensive of capital and reaction, against fascism and the threat of war in each individual country and in the international arena."

Such a People's Front requires as its solidifying force the united action of the working class through the united front of Socialists and Communists and through trade union unity. The classic development of the Popular Front through antecedent stages of the proletarian united front is to be seen in France. But it would be an error to suppose that this sequence must necessarily and at all times hold in every country. It may well be that in the United States, for instance, the Farmer-Labor Party (the American form of the People's Front), through involving in sustained common action members and adherents of the Socialist and Communist Parties, will hasten the achievement of the united front which the decisive leadership of the Socialist Party is at present unwilling to extend beyond certain limited campaigns. But the proletarian united front is the essential component of the People's Front, its basis and sustaining force. The People's Front either builds upon it at the outset or develops it indispensably as the condition for its own further development. Again let us draw upon the words of Comrade Dimitroff:

"... the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist people's front are interconnected and interwoven, the one passing into the other in the process of the practical struggle against fascism as a consequence of the *living dialectics of the struggle*, and that there is certainly no Chinese wall to keep them apart."

Why is the proletarian united front so essential to the People's Front?

Because in it lies the guarantee of the consistent, unreceding, militant mass drive against reaction to the point of maximum victory for the people. The struggle against the forces of Toryism can have victorious outcome only if the petty-bourgeois sections ally themselves in vast numbers with the working class. That alliance can be effective only if the working class assumes leadership; for it alone stands in basic and perpetually irreconcilable antagonism to the capitalist class as a whole and to the monopoly capitalist promoters of fascism.

The assumption of leadership, in turn, presupposes in the working class united ranks and capacity for effective consolidated action to inspire confidence in its class allies and to spur the front as a whole to ever further advances.

The proletarian united front within the People's Front is the steel bulwark against the policy of the "lesser evil".

This, and this alone, is the reason Old Guard Social-Democracy finds the participation of Communists the fly in the ointment in the People's Front. All would be well—"the method used so successfully"—if we could eliminate "the adherence of the Communists". Indeed, not so long ago, the same John Powers found it possible to write:

"The Alliance that will destroy fascism will not be the alliance of Socialists and Communists, but the union of all genuinely democratic forces for the defense of freedom and democracy, with the Socialists and trade unions in the lead. It is a source of hope and satisfaction that this is precisely the alliance that has developed in France to eclipse the unnatural united front of Socialists and Communists."*

These words were written in comment upon the magnificent Bastille Day celebration in the course of which 10,000 assembled delegates, representing 70 organizations, took the mass oath that pledged the formation of the People's Front.

A few facts will suffice to indicate to what extent Mr. Powers' basis for hope and satisfaction is objective analysis and to what extent mere Old Guard wish fulfillment:

Among the speakers that addressed the assembly was Jacques Duclos, a leader of the Communist Party, who was accorded an enthusiastic reception. The impressive procession of the delegates, following the assemblage, was led by representatives of the Communist, Socialist, and Radical Parties, while two huge banners heading the procession bore respectively the emblems of the red liberty cap and the hammer and sickle.

When, half a year later, the program of the People's Front was published, the Radical journal, *La République*, thus paid tribute to the role of the Communist Party:

"Generations to come will thank the Communist Party for the important part it played in the formation of the People's Front."**

Need one also call into evidence against the Powerses the fact that the forces of the People's Front in France, resolutely bent on destroying fascism, have by their recent balloting strongly indicated that they hold as a source of hope and satisfaction the very natural united front of Socialists and Communists?

(To be continued)

* *New Leader*, July 20, 1935.

** *La République*, January 7, 1936.

The Struggle for Puerto Rican Independence

By HARRY ROBINSON

FOR 38 years American imperialism has owned Puerto Rico, beautiful Caribbean island. During all that time, not one word was spoken in *Washington* of Puerto Rican independence. On the contrary, the program of the present Democratic administration has a plank calling for "statehood" for the island. Suddenly, or so it seemed to the press and the island, the Roosevelt-backed Tydings Bill offering independence to the colony was introduced in Congress. Why this sudden change of front? Why offer independence to this important war base protecting the Panama Canal, this source of huge colonial super-profits for American finance capital, this "model" colony of Yankee imperialism and example of its "civilizing rule" to the other countries of South and Caribbean America? Why, in fact, speak of independence at all—at the worst, a very dangerous business for imperialism?

There are various factors which indicate the reasons for this change of front, but they all revolve around one central point. The "Tydings independence" was offered because the people of Puerto Rico *were taking the road to real independence*. The growing mass struggles for independence, the developing unity of the people, are putting the Yankee rule on the spot, in the island, as well as before the other countries of South and Caribbean America with which Roosevelt is arranging a Pan-American Peace Conference.

Hence, the Tydings Bill and its provisions.

THE TYDINGS BILL

"The American system is not functioning properly in Puerto Rico," said Senator Tydings on April 24 when he introduced his bill. Backed by the Roosevelt administration, the Tydings Bill contains the following provisions: In 1937 a plebiscite will determine whether the people want the "Tydings independence" or their present ignominious colonial status. Once determined that the vote is for "independence", a constitutional convention will be called *by the present American colonial government* and a "commonwealth" of four years' duration will be instituted. After these four years, sovereignty will be granted, except for various and omnipotent American naval reservations.

The Commonwealth will be limited by numerous hog-tying clauses. American imperialist supervision will be guaranteed in foreign affairs, debt-making powers, trade, property rights, etc. An American high commissioner "whose authority is to be recognized" will do the supervising. Not losing sight of the strategic importance of this Caribbean island, the bill will recognize "the right of the United States to expropriate property for public uses, to maintain military and other reservations in Puerto Rico, *and to call into the service armed forces organized by the new government*".

Most salient of all is Section III, which provides that "during the second year after the inauguration of the commonwealth, the United States may charge 25 per cent of the usual tariff rates on articles imported from Puerto Rico; during the third year this rate shall be 50 per cent; and during the fourth year, 75 per cent". (There is at present no tariff on Puerto Rican goods, since the island is a territory of the United States.)

THE PAN-AMERICAN PEACE CONFERENCE AND FREEDOM

Not only is the rising national revolution in Puerto Rico the concern of imperialism, but likewise the effect of this unrest in the "model colony" on the position of the United States before the other countries of South and Caribbean America. British and Japanese imperialism wait like lions in the night to spring upon any weakness within the camp of Yankee imperialism in the ruthless fight for the market. All the open scandals must therefore be toned down. Especially the drawing closer of the Pan-American Peace Conference lends added weight to this offer of "independence" to the only direct colony of the United States. Intervention in Cuba "to protect American interests", in Nicaragua, in Haiti, accompanied by mass liberation struggles of the people has sullied quite a bit the shield of the Monroe Doctrine. The ruthless "dollar diplomacy" has been so thoroughly exposed that Roosevelt is forced to seek more subtle methods to continue the same ruthless domineering policy. Hence the "good neighbor" policy of sweet smiles, of abrogating the Platt Amendment in Cuba, of withdrawing the marines from Haiti, of settling the old dispute with Panama, and now of offering independence to Puerto Rico. But imperialism is taking no false steps. As Lenin pointed out long ago:

"Finance capital is such a tremendous, one can say, decisive force in all economic and international relations that it is able to subdue and is actually subduing even states enjoying the fullest political independence."

So what will Yankee imperialism lose in Puerto Rico by granting

independence, especially this peculiar castrated sovereignty which the Tydings Bill proposes?

YANKEE IMPERIALISM AS LORD AND MASTER

In 1898, when Wall Street took over the island of Puerto Rico as the booty of war with Spain, several salient steps were quickly taken to squelch all independent and native economic development. First, in 1900 the Puerto Rican *peso* was changed into the American dollar, thus reducing the wealth of the native and Spanish bourgeoisie and landowners at one blow *by a third!* Next came the application of the Coastwise Shipping Act which forced all Puerto Rican trade into American monopolist hands by decreeing that all commerce must be carried on in American ships or through American ports. The protective tariff accentuated this trade monopoly by forbidding the independent sale of Puerto Rican goods in the likewise protected world market. In this outrageous manner, all attempts of the native bourgeoisie to develop independently the island economy were nipped in the bud.

With the American army in power, followed later by a succession of omnipotent governors, with the native bourgeoisie seriously weakened, with the market assured, Wall Street scrambled for investments. Coffee, the chief native crop, was sent begging for a market. Sugar, which in 1898 was produced by 400 mills and totaled 54,000 tons, is today produced by 42 mills and comprises 75 per cent of the exports. Four huge American plantation companies alone own over half of the sugar land and produce more than half of the crop; and American holdings in sugar reach 65 per cent of the total. Ruling the sugar roost, as in Cuba, are the National City Bank and the Chase National Bank.

Of the remaining export crops, tobacco is 85 per cent controlled by one American monopoly—the Puerto Rican American Tobacco Company. The coffee crop is gradually being swallowed by the American governmental credit agencies, thanks to the lack of a market (the treaties with Brazil, Colombia, etc.). So undermined is the market for Puerto Rican coffee, that the native bourgeoisie (whose only remaining base nominally independent of the American banks is coffee) has been able, after years of struggle, to force through a tariff of 15 per cent on coffee *imported into the island!* Since then some strange gyrations have occurred. In 1934 Puerto Rico *imported* 39,000 pounds of coffee. In 1935 the imports grew to 330,000 pounds! Exports to the United States decreased by 500,000 pounds. And exactly 500,000 pounds is reported by the Puerto Rican producers as *an unsalable surplus!* The Yankee credit agencies reap their harvest.

Except for one Canadian power company (against which Roosevelt is taking action through a scheme of "rural electrification"), one municipal light company, and one small native-owned power company, all public utilities, bus lines, power companies, irrigation works and railroads are American owned. Four American steamship lines monopolize all freight trade and charge exorbitant rates.

Two Yankee banks—the National City and the Chase National—dominate the credit scene. Rates are usurious—8 to 10 per cent for Puerto Rican producers, but only 6 per cent for Americans.

It is estimated by the governmental agencies that mortgages on Puerto Rican land total more than 100 per cent of its total current valuation. The Federal Land Bank alone claims loans of over \$50,000,000.

"THE MOST DISTRESSFUL COUNTRY"

Producing only a few cash crops for the world market, buried under debts to the Yankee banks, the Puerto Rican peasant and small landowner have been triply hit by the agrarian crisis. The sugar restriction policy of the A.A.A. and the lowered sugar price have taken the remaining ground from under the feet of the sugar *colonos* (small sugar cane growers). Dominated by the all-pervading power of the American-owned "central" (sugar mill) through credits, ownership of railroads, and monopoly of milling, the *colono*, in return for restricting his crop, did not even get his compensation as promised. The *centralistas* and banks gobbled it all up. Two American corporations alone received A.A.A. checks to the tune of \$900,000 apiece.

For over six years the municipalities have not paid their employees, because the farmers have been unable to pay taxes. Dispossessed and landless, confined to the unfertile mountain soil, the peasants are starving. Rapidly reaching the conditions of mass famine, faced with the ever-present threat of foreclosure or forced sale for non-payment of taxes, the peasants, in their unrest, are breaking through the landlord-controlled Farmers' Association. In a congress held in March of this year, they voted to call a tax strike to demand a moratorium on debts, as one of a number of concessions. "If these demands were not granted peacefully, they would take the path of rebellion," they warned.

For the workers, conditions are even worse. Unemployment stalks the island. Over 84.6 per cent of the population is in need (read hungry), reports the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in the island. A million dollars a month is supposed to be spent in the island for relief. But Governor Winship stoutly "vindicated" the Puerto Ricans by maintaining recently that over 80 per cent

of that sum is spent in the United States for materials! And on the 30th of June even this miserable pittance will cease.

But, strangest of all, this imperialist-caused starvation and misery are used as an excuse *against independence*. In fact, the arch-reactionary *Herald Tribune* sent down a special correspondent, Edward Angly, to hunt up arguments against independence. But interspersed in his imperialist arguments are some interesting scenes of Puerto Rican life. Let us look at a few of them:

"Suppose [in the United States] there were no schools for half the swarming children, that almost a third of the population was afflicted with hookworm and could not or would not [?] buy shoes and build and use latrines to rid themselves of the disease. Suppose, because of the tariffs of a bigger country that held yours as a colony and bought all but a handful of your exports, that you had to pay even higher prices for your staple foods than you do today, while at the same time, the laborer's hire in the fields came, when he could get it, to merely 40 to 60 cents a day. Assume that the working womenfolk were mostly in the needle trades and received four, even three, sometimes but two cents an hour for embroidering of nighties, panties, hankies and fingertip towels for the use of other women far away overseas. . . .

"Just imagine all that in the United States and still you would be seeing only a few of the shadows in the picture that make Puerto Rico what an old Irish song called 'the most distressful country that ever I have seen'. . . ."

Angly concludes that the Tydings Bill will not help Puerto Rico. In that he is correct, but for totally different reasons than he presents. His main thesis for this contention is that Puerto Rico cannot develop independently on a "cash crop economy" without the American market. But, with typical imperialist reasoning, he puts the cart before the horse. For it was Yankee imperialism, not internal conditions, which stifled all independent Puerto Rican development in order to convert it into an "agrarian [raw material] appendage of foreign finance capital".

ALL IS NOT GOLD

But, as always, behind Roosevelt's gracious "independence" gesture lurks the mailed fist of imperialism. Hand in hand with the abrogations of the Platt Amendment guaranteeing the United States the right to intervene in Cuba came the native-industry-smashing Reciprocity Treaty. In Puerto Rico, the tariff provisions of the Tydings Bill do the trick.

What are the articles imported from Puerto Rico which will be affected by the tariff? First, sugar, which comprises, as we have seen, about 75 per cent of the total exports; then, tobacco and fruit. Coffee is exported mainly to European markets. Thus, the weight

of this provision will affect the sugar industry, which in turn is almost the entire economic life of the island. But the sugar industry is owned in the main by American corporations and banks. Is this not then contradictory? Is imperialism going to harm itself?

This seeming contradiction is a response to the sugar industry's own contradictions, and attempts to solve them in a typically imperialist manner. Who will benefit by such a move? First, the American beet sugar growers, who will lose one of their tariffless competitors. Secondly, the Cuban sugar growers. But these Cuban sugar companies are owned mainly by the same banks who in turn dominate Puerto Rican sugar. Here is where two related factors enter. First, the depredations of the agrarian crisis leave the monopoly plantation owners with idle land and factories and willing to curtail production on part of their property. Hence the moves of the Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration to buy up idle sugar land to convert into "subsistence farms" in order to "diversify agriculture". Secretary Ickes, in a recent visit to the island, gave the administration's approval to these measures and attacked the "landgrabber" sugar growers. Secondly, the problem of war preparations involves the securing of the necessary raw materials from as close as possible to the mainland. Puerto Rican sugar, a thousand-odd miles of water away, is not the most strategically located. Hence this long-time perspective of restricting sugar production in the island.

This restriction, however, does not mean that imperialism will abandon its very profitable Puerto Rican sugar fields. On the contrary, the proposed tariff *will harm first of all the smaller native producers*, and will further cement American economic positions. The Puerto Rican producers, of which there are few, will find it more impossible to compete with the superior American mills, which are the possessors of cheaper credit and markets and capable of *ruthlessly reducing wages and oppressing the sugar colonos even more*.

Wrapped in this tariff provision we, therefore, find the subtle hypocrisy of Roosevelt. Constituting a threat to that section of the national bourgeoisie and landowners linked up with the sugar industry, he expects them to fight the national revolution and organize the people to vote *against* the Tydings independence by spreading the tale that it means *more* hunger and economic catastrophe. As Dr. Ernest Gruening, head of the Department of Territories and Insular Possessions, cynically phrases it:

"If the Puerto Ricans in the referendum projected in the bill for November of 1937 should decide against accepting the responsibilities of independence, it would settle the agitation which has long disturbed the insular government. The United States has nothing to lose if the vote went in the other direction."

This independence gesture, therefore, has the added virtue of attempting to split the people on the issue, thus giving imperialism the opportunity it seeks to drown the national revolution in blood. As *The New York Times* succinctly puts it:

"It [the Tydings Bill] may be advocated on the ground that the time has come when our government must sternly suppress acts of political terrorism which have recently increased in number, and that we can best pursue such a policy if it goes hand in hand with an alternative offer of independence."

THE MARCANTONIO BILL FOR IMMEDIATE INDEPENDENCE

What roads offer themselves to the Puerto Rican people in their struggle for complete national liberation? Statehood? But that means only a continuation of the present colonial status and a deepening of the dependency of the *colony*, bringing with it greater national shame. This solution of the sugar interests does not solve the problems of the people. The Tydings Bill? Its tariff provisions would ruin the only source of Puerto Rican income, the sale of its cash crops, *without creating substitutes*. Imperialism would lose none of its economic positions, but would only strengthen them. Puerto Rico would remain a pawn in the war plans of imperialism as the site of some of the most important Caribbean naval bases. Independent development would not be furthered but only hindered. This, likewise, is no solution to the burning problems. What is needed is full, complete and immediate independence.

Such is the purpose of the Marcantonio Bill for Puerto Rican independence, introduced by Representative Marcantonio on May 6. This bill provides: that ninety days after the bill becomes law the President shall proclaim Puerto Rico free and independent; that all American naval and military reservations shall be given up; that the people shall be free to set up any government they see fit without any interference from the United States; that this government shall make any disposition it see fit of the American property now in the island. Recognizing the responsibility of American imperialism for the present economic catastrophe in the island, the bill provides that no tariff on Puerto Rican products be charged until the new government should desire otherwise. It also declares for the payment of an indemnity for any claims that the new government may make. A commission of five from each power would arbitrate all claims.

It would be folly to expect the present imperialist government to pass such a law, as Congressman Marcantonio said:

"The Puerto Rican people should hold no illusions. Neither the Tydings Bill, nor my bill, nor any other bill will grant independence

on a silver platter. Only their united strength, the formation of an anti-imperialist front of the whole people against the foreign dominators and their own national traitors are the best guarantee of achieving independence. Behind them will stand the overwhelming majority of the great American people, who hate oppression and love freedom."

THE GROWING NATIONAL REVOLUTION

What are these acts of "political terrorism", which the *Times* refers to, that have caused American imperialism to abandon its traditional position of maintaining Puerto Rico as its direct colony? They are the beginnings of the unity of the people against imperialism and the national traitors.

The immediate act of "political terror" to which the *Times* and Senator Tydings referred was the assassination of the American chief of the Puerto Rican police, Colonel Riggs, on February 24, by two national revolutionary youths. What was the background of this act? The call for a People's Anti-Imperialist Front issued by the Communist Party was meeting with more and more support among the masses and especially the national revolutionary Nationalist Party. The danger to Yankee rule that the Nationalist Party would join in a united front with the Communists led imperialism to attack. "All possible leaders of the growing revolt must be eliminated," was the problem of the imperialists most capably expressed by the aforementioned Colonel Riggs, who gave orders to the police to "shoot first and talk later". On October 24, in the university town of Rio Piedras, the first shots in the offensive were fired. Four Nationalists were massacred by the police.

That bloody action set off the gathering storm. The press united in denouncing the police. One survivor of the massacre, held for attacking an officer, was freed by mass pressure. The Nationalists publicly swore vengeance and raised the slogan of "arms, arms, arms!"

It was in this tense atmosphere that Riggs was assassinated. The two young Nationalists who did the shooting were immediately lynched by the police in the Central Police Headquarters. The storm of indignation was so great that the police were indicted for murder by the grand jury.

In the beginning of March, nine of the leading members of the Nationalist Party were arrested by the Federal Department of Justice and held for "inciting to insurrection". The General Secretary of the Nationalist Party, Juan Antonio Corretjer, has been imprisoned for one year for "contempt of court". Among the arrested Nationalists is Pedro Albizu Campos, President of the Party, and beloved national leader.

The Communist Party, jointly with the Nationalists and individuals of the other parties, began to call a series of mass meetings which shook the country. For the first time, the unity of the Puerto Rican people began to be expressed in reality, and the confidence of the masses in their own strength increased. Around the issue of the defense of the national revolutionary party and its leaders, the united front began to form. Prominent leaders of the national-reformist Liberal Party, including their parliamentary leader, Ramos Antonini, called for the unity of the whole people in defense of Albizu and his comrades.

It was this growing united front, the growing isolation of the pro-imperialist leaders, the anger of the masses leading to hesitations and splits in the national-reformist ranks, which brought about the presentation of the Tydings Bill. As W. F. O'Reilly, *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent, pointed out:

"Probably failure of the leaders and the press to condemn outspokenly the conditions leading up to the murder of the chief of the insular police, Colonel Francis E. Riggs, gave greater impetus than any other happening to the administration's change of policy."

In presenting the Tydings Bill with the intention of sidetracking the national liberation movement into a peaceful waiting for action from Washington, Roosevelt reckoned without the host—the Puerto Rican people.

"Into this growing united front movement, the Tydings Bill offering independence," a letter from the island reports, "fell like a cannon-cracker; and the Marcantonio Bill giving complete and immediate self-determination, like a bomb."

The camp of national revolution united under one slogan—"a national united front for the immediate convocation of a Constituent Convention and the proclamation of the Republic". Released by the Communist, Nationalist, and Independentist Parties, this slogan became the rallying cry of the whole country. The *Daily Worker* has already published a picture of the first demonstration held under this slogan in the coffee and mountain town of Utuado. *All political parties participated*. In over 20 of the 73 cities and towns in the island, this action was duplicated.

Before the advancing unity of the people, the class lines and different group interests within the various parties became more sharply drawn. So sharp has the struggle become, and the accompanying protests of the American Tories interested in Puerto Rican sugar and a strong naval base, that Roosevelt, as usual, has capitulated. First, Senator Tydings announced that this session of Congress would not vote on his bill. Then, on May 26, the whole question was sidetracked to an "investigation committee".

THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND NATIONAL UNITY

The Union Republican Party, in response to the Tydings Bill, passed a resolution calling for an amendment which added the alternatives of "statehood" to the plebiscite. One section of its leadership is linked directly with imperialism through its integration in the sugar industry owned by the Yankee corporations. Practically the entire Executive Committee of the Association of Sugar Producers is at the same time the Executive Committee of this party. Another section of its leadership represents the commercial and trading bourgeoisie, mostly of Spanish origin, linked to imperialism in the monopoly of the market. But within this party, whose leadership is openly pro-imperialist, the struggle between these two groups for the opportunity to rob or exploit the masses is causing a split. Already one section of the commercial bourgeoisie split off last October and formed the Regional Party, whose platform advocates a "self-governing Puerto Rico". Direct causes here were the Roosevelt inflation policy and the sugar restriction program reducing the home market. The Union Republican leaders have prohibited their lower organizations from participating in the united front movement. Nonetheless, these organizations are participating. In a convention of the Union Republican Youth a serious fight was started over the whole question, which may lead to a split.

In an election coalition with the Union Republican Party is the Socialist Party. Together they now control the insular legislature. Years ago the Socialist Party was born in struggle. Led by leaders with anarchist tendencies, however, they had no revolutionary perspectives in the concrete conditions of a colony. Some of the leaders have sold out to the imperialist-dominated policies of the American Federation of Labor Executive Committee and try their best to bolster up imperialist prestige. Santiago Iglesias, their President and present Resident Commissioner in Washington, is at the same time the Secretary of the "defunct but not yet buried" Pan-American Federation of Labor. In control of the Puerto Rican Department of Labor, these leaders are the most astute promoters of "class collaboration" and the most fertile boasters of the "civilizing mission" of American rule. It is this section of the Socialist leadership which joins with the Union Republicans in advocating "statehood".

But the Socialist class struggle traditions are not dead. Within the Socialist ranks a Left wing is being formed with a Marxist orientation. This has especially taken place when the leaders are connected with the few remaining trade unions. As yet no national figure has come forward as the leader, but the following directives

given out by the Central Committee on the question of the Tydings Bill show where the wind is blowing:

"The Territorial Executive Committee also instructs all organizations and members of the Socialist Party to abstain from taking any part in so-called united front movements which can create confusion in the discipline, in the struggles, of the Socialist Party of Puerto Rico."

This party was once connected with the Second International and later considered itself a branch of the American Socialist Party. Today it is isolated internationally. Its program is limited to petty reforms and parliamentary struggle. Its mass base used to be the Free Federation of Workers, affiliated with the A. F. of L.; but recent years have witnessed a sharp decline in its strength, due to neglect and too shameful strike sellouts.

The leadership of these two parties are imperialism's main direct prop. It appears strange that pro-imperialist parties should win the majority of the electorate in a direct, super-exploited colony. But their campaigns carried out under the "statehood" and "socialist" slogans have as their main thesis the attempt to prove that independence would be "harmful" to the sugar industry and the American market from which almost the entire country derives its support. "Statehood," therefore, is presented as a progressive step, which, while giving the Puerto Ricans the right to elect their own governor, would at the same time assure the American market. The fear of the Yankee warships and the "impossibility" of a successful revolution are constantly harped upon by the "Socialist" leaders.

The Liberal Party is national-reformist; its struggle against the imperialist robbers is constantly vacillating. Under the pressure of the rising mass movement, two wings are becoming increasingly clear in it. One, for accepting the Tydings Bill *as is*, in spite of its attacks on their economic positions; and the other, for rallying the mass struggle under the united front and proclaiming independence immediately.

The resolution of the last Central Committee meeting adopted the waiting attitude. "Within the Tydings granted independence, they would, with order and patience, fight for their economic rights." But the long standing advocacy of independence has forced the Liberal Party to straddle both horses before the actions of the masses and their own lower organs. Their president, Barcelo, speaks from the platform of the united front. So sharp is the fight becoming within the party that there is open talk of a split.

The national revolutionary wing tending to be formed has already taken root. Within it are most of the prominent intellectual

leaders, the Liberal Youth organization (which, in turn, called for a united front of the youth) and most of their mass base among the petty bourgeois intellectuals, students, peasants, workers, and small storekeepers. In the localities, the Liberal Committees participate actively in the united front for independence.

In the camp of the national revolution we find the Nationalist Party. Led by Albizu Campos, it is composed in the main of students, petty-bourgeois intellectuals, and some workers. It is rapidly rising to the position of a leading political factor in the island. It stands out as an anti-imperialist sector offering the program of immediate and direct struggle. It considers the Treaty of Paris which ceded Puerto Rico to the United States null and void, because at that time Puerto Rico, with its autonomy won from Spain, had the power to make its own treaties and therefore could not be disposed of as a possession. Among the youth it has organized a corps of "Cadets of the Republic" who drill with wooden rifles. In the middle of May the cadets were officially disbanded by the police and forbidden to drill in public.

A leading factor in all the movements for the anti-imperialist united front is the Communist Party. Its slogans become the everyday slogans of the masses. Even in towns where there are no Communist groups, the Communist Party has been invited. Its influence in the growing united front can be gauged by the fact that the Convention of the Young Liberals gave a vote of thanks to the Chairman of the Party, Lanauze Rolon. One of the prime factors behind the present mass movement was the May First meetings and the appearance of the Communist organ, *Lucha Obrera* (*Workers' Struggle*) with the call for the Constituent Convention and the united front.

THE UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT IN PUERTO RICO

The present united front for a Constituent Convention remains a bloc of anti-imperialist organizations and individuals having the sympathy of the broad masses of the people. In raising the question of the "Proclamation of the Republic" it has raised the question of winning power. What must it do to achieve this responsible and honorable goal of winning a Puerto Rico for the Puerto Ricans? The answer is clear. Pointing the way is the historic Seventh Congress of the Communist International. Its call for the formation of the anti-imperialist people's front in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is meeting with decisive successes in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and China. In Puerto Rico, direct Yankee colony, super-exploited, economically and nationally enslaved, such a front would include all the political parties, except the national traitors of the Union Republican Party directly linked with imperialism.

The danger that the more compromising of the national reformists will even now desert to the side of the imperialists was vividly

brought out by the recent mass student strikes and demonstrations when these compromises raised the question: "Will the republic mean the continuance of this disorder?" All the more does it become necessary for the Communist Party to work together with all anti-imperialist forces, no matter how unstable, how vacillating, particularly with that section of the national bourgeoisie which under the pressure of the mass movement and the pressure of its own contradictions with imperialism supports the common struggle against the *main enemy*—imperialism. Only in the course of this struggle, for a common anti-imperialist platform, will the national betrayers lose the hold they at present have over the masses.

All the more important does it become to win proletarian leadership of the whole national movement, which, in close alliance with the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie, will be able to fight for and win the immediate burning demands of the people for food and shelter, against the imperialist robbery of the land, etc. For it is only by their own experience *in the course of the struggle* for these demands which are at the same time directed first of all against Yankee imperialism, that the people will learn of the treacherous nature that characterizes leaders of the national bourgeoisie. Only thus will the Communists prepare the people to meet, with all the weapons at their disposal, the inevitable national-reformist vacillations which will take place when the peasants begin to take over the land of the landowners and when the proletariat wins its historic hegemony.

For it is clear to the Communists that full national liberation will not be achieved by the mere setting up of an independent republic. Complete national liberation means the smashing of the Wall Street economic positions, of the strangulating grip of finance capital which shapes Puerto Rico to its own robber designs—monocultural sugar industry, market monopoly, etc. Complete national liberation means the opportunity to develop native industry and a home market, which, in turn, depends on the completion of the agrarian revolution. But in Puerto Rico, entirely dominated by imperialism, whose weak national bourgeoisie is linked to, or dependent upon, imperialism, these basic questions of liberation will be answered only by Soviet power—the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. It is precisely the development of the revolution through the stage of the united national front which will create the conditions for the stage of Soviet power.

AMERICAN HELP IS DECISIVE

One of the main talking points which retard the growth of the mass movement for Puerto Rican freedom, and which is used by the national reformists and national traitors to mislead the masses

into the compromising positions of "legislative commission", "bargaining power", is the geographical position of the island. Its small size, its lack of native industry, its proximity to the mainland, the ease with which imperialism could organize intervention and blockade, are real fears for the Puerto Rican people. All the more, therefore, does it become *decisive* for the victory of the national revolution that the American working class support in all ways possible the struggle for freedom.

The effect of the Marcantonio Bill upon the course of the anti-imperialist struggle is only one example of the avidity with which the people await all signs of American support. To win its spurs as a consistent fighter for proletarian internationalism, to carry out its own tasks in its own fight against American imperialism, the Communist Party of the United States has a grave duty to the peoples of Cuba, Puerto Rico, etc.

It was Comrade Wang Ming, leader of the great Chinese Communist Party, who emphasized this at the Seventh World Congress. In criticizing those Communists who underestimate the importance of supporting the colonial struggles, he said:

"This may be shown by the fact that certain Communists who work in capitalist countries usually regard colonial revolutions as something extraneous, or at best, as insignificant, auxiliary forces of the world revolution. This is an entirely incorrect conception of the role and significance of the colonial revolution of the new epoch—the epoch of world proletarian revolution, one of whose component parts, according to Lenin and Stalin, is the colonial revolution.

"It [the colonial revolution] is important because the actual rulers there are the same enemies of the people against whom, and for the overthrow of whose rule, we fight in our own home."

Puerto Rico has taken its place by the side of Cuba as a sore spot of Yankee rule in the Caribbean. Its position as a direct colony, nakedly ruled by Wall Street, should make it more than ever a matter of Communist honor to fight for the freedom of its people.

The Marcantonio Bill, which clearly expresses the position of the American proletariat for the immediate national liberation of the Puerto Rican people, can serve as a banner of struggle to rally the American people to the side of their Puerto Rican allies. There is no reason, also, why the nascent Farmer-Labor Party cannot make the fight for this Bill one of its main slogans. For the American people cannot fight for peace without raising the question of the freedom of nations super-exploited and oppressed by Yankee imperialism and over whose fate war is being prepared. A blow for Puerto Rican freedom will cut the ground from under Roosevelt's Pan-American "Peace" Conference war preparations and will greatly impede his war preparations in the Caribbean.

Problems of Party Growth in the New York District

*(Report to the Ninth Convention of the New York District,
C.P.U.S.A., June 14, 1936.)*

By MAX STEINBERG

IN presenting the report on organization on behalf of the District Committee, we shall attempt to examine the life and activity of our whole Party in the District, embracing the past 27 months, since our last Convention, held in March, 1934.

At that time the Party was busily engaged in the practical application of the Open Letter which called for the entrenchment of our Party among the basic and decisive sections of the American working class. At that Convention we were already able to report progress in this direction and registered the fact that our Party was beginning to work along a definite plan in the light of the tasks set forth by the Open Letter.

THE GROWTH OF THE PARTY

Since our last Convention we have improved considerably, both in our methods of work within the Party and in our approach to the masses generally, especially in our work among the organized workers within the A. F. of L. Since the last Convention we have become a greater factor in the struggles of the workers and, as a result, we can report that our Party has grown both in numbers and influence.

In March, 1934, we had fourteen sections in our District, with a total membership on the rolls of 5,495. At present we have thirty-one sections, three of which are included in the special sub-division of Harlem, with a membership almost three times that of 1934—15,814. This number, of course, is our membership on the rolls. The dues payment, however, at present is 12,870.

This increase to 15,814 members can be seen in almost every category of membership. We have increased from 3,992 men to 10,672; from 1,503 women to 5,142. Our Negro membership has increased from 240 to 1,039. Our native membership has grown from 1,232 to 6,942. Our foreign-born membership now is 8,872 as against 4,263 in 1934. (At least 75 per cent of these are natural-

ized citizens.) We have increased our total membership over this period of time by 188 per cent!

The increase in the various categories is as follows: Women from 28 per cent to 33.4 per cent; Negroes from $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; Native born from 22 per cent to 43 per cent. In 1934, the percentage of employed in our Party was 55 per cent. At present it is 67 per cent.

If we take some of the basic industries we see a growth of membership in the marine industry from 119 to 368; in the railroad industry from 20 to 39; in the transport industry, which includes taxi-drivers and truckmen, from 92 to 214; in the metal industry from 301 to 449; in the power industry from practically none to 22. All in all, we have, in the above-mentioned groups of industries, an increase of 560. Excluding taxi-drivers and truckmen, the growth is $72\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in these basic industries. However, this group represents today only 6 per cent of our membership as against $9\frac{3}{4}$ per cent in 1934.

In other industries, such as the needle industry, we have an increase of 920; in the building trades, 448; food, 639; post office, 48; printing, 113; shoe, 20; building service, 225; and in furniture, 26.

In the white collar and professional groups, the increase is 3,816; and in all of the other trades and categories combined, the increase is 4,139.

Of our members 3,173 were in trade unions in 1934, or 56 per cent. At present the number is 8,649. While the increase of our membership in the trade unions is 5,476, the percentage of our total membership in trade unions remains at 56 per cent. Of the remainder of 7,165 who are not in trade unions, we have 5,787 who are eligible for trade union membership.

Sixty per cent of our total membership is under 35 years of age, and 59 per cent is one year or less in the Party.

As to the distribution of the Party membership in the various Party organizations, we can report that we have now 285 shop nuclei, as against 84 in March, 1934, with a membership of 2,957, as against 581 at that time. (There are also four shop nuclei in the Buffalo section with a membership of about 35 to 40.) The percentage of our Party membership in shop nuclei is 18 per cent as against 10 per cent in 1934. Approximately 1,827, or 12 per cent of our members, are in 92 industrial units; approximately 4,372, or 28 per cent, are in 58 Assembly District branches; 6,141, or 39 per cent, are in 153 street units; and 517, or 3 per cent, are in 41 concentration units. In all, we have a total of 629 Party units.

The most important feature here is the great increase in our

shop nuclei—both in number and in the percentage of membership.

PARTY FLUCTUATION

The above figures, comrades, are encouraging. They show that our Party has grown considerably in the recent period as a result of its improved methods of work internally and in mass work. At the same time we have to study these figures carefully in order to see what problems they present to our Party. We are confronted with many problems at this time—problems, which if solved even partially, will make for rapid increase in our activity among the masses.

Let us go back for a moment to the numerical growth of our membership. The increase of 10,319 is a great achievement. Yet, if we take into consideration the fact that during this period we recruited 16,071, we see a loss of 5,752. In particular, we see that our loss is entirely too great among industrial workers, and in basic industry especially. If we take, for instance, a group of industries such as marine, metal, transport, railroad, and shipbuilding, we see a loss of 1,010 of the 1,396 recruited during this period. Of course, it is necessary to point out that these 1,010 lost are not necessarily all new recruits. There may be some of the older Party members who have dropped out or who have been transferred to other Districts. In the main, however, the point made is significant. And we find this to be true in all other categories of industrial workers.

If we take our Negro membership, the gain of 799 certainly marks the growth of our Party among the Negro people; but we have to remember that during this period we recruited 1,552.

The above figures indicate a serious fluctuation, in general, and among basic and Negro workers, in particular. It is our task at this Convention to analyze this fluctuation in the light of our past activities and experiences, determine the causes for the situation, and try to draw lessons that will enable us to retain the thousands of workers we recruit annually.

To make it possible for this Convention to find a solution for this problem of fluctuation, the following questions should be asked: (1) What are the causes of fluctuation? (2) To what do we ascribe the serious fluctuation among basic industry and Negro workers? (3) What steps shall we take to decrease the percentage of fluctuation?

It is clear that the bulk of our new recruits come into the Party as a result of the various struggles in which our Party participates and leads. These workers who have received their first lessons in the class struggle come primarily because they have seen in it an organization which fights for the improvement of their immediate material conditions.

In many instances these workers, upon joining, have a limited understanding of what the Party is, and of its revolutionary role in the labor movement.

These workers do not always get the opportunity to learn in the unit those things about the Party that they did not know before they joined. Our unit meetings are not yet the training ground, the place where important, current, complicated problems of the Party and the working class are discussed and simplified so as to enable new members to understand these things. The unit meetings are, all too often, dull and uninteresting, with the major time spent on routine work.

Quite frequently, because of the general atmosphere of the unit meetings, because of the very terminology used, the new recruits feel strange and not very much tempted to come to another meeting. There is not enough consistent effort within the units to help our new recruits understand the problems of the Party. The dry and uninteresting life of the unit, the continuous drive for assignments, which are not sufficiently explained in the light of the broad tasks of our Party—all these factors drive many of these workers from our ranks.

We must now consider fluctuation where it concerns us most—among the basic workers. The worker in basic industry joins our Party because he sees in it a force to help him solve his difficult problems in the shop and in the trade union. Having joined, he finds no answer to many of his problems. Instead, he faces the routine mechanics of unit life, which consist of assignments and tasks. The unit, as stated, is not yet the place in which he gets the training and development to understand the revolutionary role of the Party in relation to his problems. Furthermore, since our work in the basic industries has been in the main developed from the outside, we still find, to a large degree, a domination of basic units by comrades attached from the outside. These comrades, while having accomplished good work, have not fully understood the fact that our major aim must be to develop leadership from among the workers in the industry itself. Thus, we find a dampening of the initiative of some of these workers, a retarding of their political development as Party leaders. As a result, a good number have withdrawn from our ranks after attending several unit meetings.

In our opinion, these are the main reasons for fluctuation. Therefore one of the main remedies must be the improvement of the inner life of the unit, the improvement of the political training of our Party membership. Of course, we have said this many times before, but this Convention will have to make such decisions as will bring about a drastic change.

The great fluctuation among Negro workers, in addition to the reasons previously cited, is primarily due to the fact that we have not yet been able, in all instances, to establish ourselves as the outstanding fighters for the equal rights of the Negro masses.

At this Convention we can record tremendous headway in Harlem. Under the leadership, and with the direct participation of the Harlem Section (now the Harlem Division), guided by our very able Comrade Ford, united front movements have been developed around the immediate issues and demands of the Negro people and the Negro liberation movement, with the result that hundreds of Negro people have been recruited into the Party in Harlem.

In the field of our general Negro work, we must note the splendid achievements in developing the united front of the Negro and white people around the National Negro Congress, at which the Westchester delegation was one of the most representative. However, a closer examination of the figures on fluctuation reveals an alarming situation. During 1935 we recruited 618 Negroes in our District. During the same period, we lost 624, or six more than we recruited. In contrast to this, in 1934, we recruited 488 Negroes, out of whom only 61 dropped out.

What are the reasons for this high percentage of fluctuation among our Negro membership in 1935? In 1934, the Scottsboro issue was still a high point. We had developed the broadest campaign, involving not only the Negro people, but masses of white workers with their trade unions and other mass organizations. In 1935, Italian fascism marched its troops into Ethiopia. Our Party carried on activities and struggles against the invasion of Ethiopia by Mussolini. However, we slackened down in this campaign at a time when it was most necessary to develop the broadest movement against the fascist invasion. This, in view of the fact that we have not fully educated our membership to be alert to Negro problems in the shops, trade unions and white neighborhoods, is readily utilized by the bourgeois Negro politicians to foster in the Negro people a lack of confidence in the possibility of Negro and white unity.

These are the facts which seriously affect our new members and result in high fluctuation. It is necessary to point to a recent incident mentioned by Comrade Amter about the meeting at Mecca Temple, where 800 Negro people from Harlem came down and paid high admission, while only a handful of white workers were present. Such incidents, coupled with the fact that we have not developed sufficiently the struggle for Negro rights, nor involved to any considerable extent the white masses in the fight against Negro discrimination, are the main reasons for the high fluctuation of our Negro membership.

An example of our weakness in this work can be seen in Section 16, which is the Negro concentration section, second to Harlem. Here, the Party is doing good work and is growing as a result of improved mass work. But this improved work is registered in the main among white workers, although the Section is located in a predominantly Negro territory. Out of a membership of about 350, the Negro membership is about 50.

Therefore, only a real drive to educate our whole membership to the Communist position on the Negro question, as well as to give careful study to the organizational history of the Negro people, will help us solve the problem of fluctuation in this important Section.

We have already noted that while we have made splendid headway in reaching increasing masses of workers, which resulted in almost tripling our membership, we have not kept pace in the concentration industries with our recruiting from other sections of the population. This disproportionate increase in basic workers is the more serious, in view of the increased influence of our Party in trade union work in the same industries.

CONCENTRATION

Let us examine our concentration, starting with the marine industry. Since the last Convention, the workers in this industry were engaged in many mass battles, in which we played a decisive role, and took the lead in developing trade union organization. On the United Fruit dock, for instance, our Party concentrated for a long time with the utmost consistency. It put some of its best forces at this point of concentration and carefully planned its everyday activity, dealing with the economic issues of the workers, as well as bringing forward the face of the Party through literature, press, meetings, etc. This resulted in the recruiting of a few longshoremen from that dock and the formation of a dock nucleus. With the further help from the Section Committee, we were able to build up the union, develop struggles, gain concessions for the workers, and recruit into the Party at a more rapid tempo. At present we have 25 members in that dock nucleus, with some excellent elements among them.

In the recent seamen's strike, as a result of good work, we recruited many seamen. We can also record splendid work on the waterfront in the *Bremen* and *Spera* actions, which served to stimulate the sentiment of seamen and longshoremen against fascism, and to bring them closer to our Party.

This, together with the general headway we have made in the trade unions in the marine industry, are certainly achievements to be recorded at this Convention. On the other hand, we can see that

among the longshoremen on the deepwater docks, our Party is still insignificant. The fact that we were forced to combine some of the small groups on a number of docks into one Party organization shows the slow rate with which our work is progressing on the docks. And among the seamen, despite greater headway, our growth, compared to our great influence among them, is entirely too slow.

In Red Hook, it must be recorded that we slowed down on concentration, no real struggles have materialized, and the Party is even weaker than in the past.

In our work among the Italian longshoremen, we did not fully combat the influence of the jingo language press, failing to make clear to them our position on the Ethiopian war. Neither were we successful in making clear the Communist position on the Ethiopian question among the Negro longshoremen.

On the whole, however, we can state that considerable progress has been made in this important section of the working class; yet more attention has to be paid by us to concentration in this industry. We must realize that in the marine industry every individual may be of decisive importance. Consequently, here the policy of concentrating not only on docks, but also on individual recruits, has to be regarded as the principal task of our leadership on the waterfront. We have to pay greater attention to educating and developing the workers we already have in the Party. Special attention has to be paid to those forces whom the Party assigns for concentration on the marine industry, so that we may assure greater results.

At the time of the last Convention, the power industry was not adopted as a concentration point in our District. Upon the initiative of a number of Sections, some workers were recruited into the Party. These Sections began concentrating on the plants and offices of this industry in Brooklyn, mid-town, and the Bronx. Today, the power workers in the Party number 22, distributed in 5 shop nuclei. Despite a number of "Leftist" errors, stemming from inexperience, our comrades in the power industry finally became an influential factor in affiliating the union to the A. F. of L. But the growth of our Party in this field is entirely too slow. While 22 over none is a great increase, yet it is only 22. Our comrades there, for too long a time, failed to see the importance of building the Party as part of the general work of building the union. Because of this failure, the employers succeeded in raising the Red scare, and we were too slow to counteract this. The shop papers, for example, passed through a period of exclusive concern with economic issues, practically duplicating the union bulletin—or they swung to the opposite extreme of engaging in abstract political articles not connected with the issues of the workers in the plants. This has now been corrected,

and the work in this industry is improving. Where we pay attention to the development of political education, we improve our work. We can hope, on the basis of this, that we shall soon be a much greater power in this industry.

In the traction industry we have made considerable headway in building the union and the Party. We have at present 40 traction workers, but recruiting is too slow, considering that we helped to build up a mass union. Although we have a great improvement in the quality of the membership in transport, yet this can hardly compensate for the great turnover.

The general condition of the various shop nuclei in the traction industry is far from good. This is the result mainly of insufficient attention by the fraction and Section leadership. Our Sections, and now especially our leading fraction, must begin to take more serious interest in building the Party, remembering that in this industry major battles are inevitably approaching.

The influence of Father Coughlin and others is a serious menace for our Party to combat. We must make clear the Communist position on the Irish question. Our revolutionary education must be brought to the fore through forums, Party literature, the *Daily Worker*, leaflets, and *good shop papers*.

There has been a tendency among some of our comrades, both in the nuclei and in the fraction, to take the position that it might be well to eliminate shop papers altogether, on the ground that those which have gone out to date have done more harm than good. Here it must be stressed that what is necessary is, not the elimination of shop papers, but their improvement along the lines of adaptation to the particular group of workers for whom they are designed.

On the importance of Negro work in this field: Despite the presence of a "color" clause in the International Association of Machinists, the union, which has a Negro membership, achieved affiliation. This is to be considered as a real step forward in the struggle for equal rights for Negro workers in the unions. What is now needed is more consistent day-to-day enlightenment on the Negro question in our work in the union.

A final word on concentration in this field. On the I.R.T., which comprises the great majority of Party and union membership, there now remain but two Party concentration units. The recommendation of the leading fraction is that these units be discontinued. We should not infer, on the basis of this recommendation, that the principle of outside Party concentration has to be abandoned. While it is true that with the development of Party leadership inside of the industry, the center of leadership is now with the transport workers themselves, concentration by the whole Party still remains an impor-

tant matter in traction. There are still thousands of traction workers unorganized, who must be reached by our Party. Accordingly, our approach should be in the direction of eliminating concentration units at certain points, and creating concentration units at points where they are desirable. Especially must we build concentration units with some of the best forces in our Party on the B.M.T. lines where we are still very weak.

In this connection, much more can be done by our Party comrades who use subway systems day and evening, by contacting traction workers on the job, distributing Party literature, etc., and thereby involving the whole Party in this concentration.

The dining car nucleus in the Sunnyside Yards was instrumental in building a mass union. It brought forward the campaigns of the Party to these workers and succeeded in getting the local to send delegates to the National Negro Congress, to participate in the May Day demonstration, to go on record for the Labor Party, etc. Recently five workers were recruited into the Party. The significance of this unit lies in the fact that it operates entirely among Negro workers.

Generally speaking, however, we can say that our Party units in the railroad industry, while doing good work in the unions, have not sufficiently developed activities on such an important issue as the Labor Party, as well as other campaigns. This is reflected at our unit meetings, where political issues and Party education are not given sufficient attention. Our membership among the railroad workers has increased by only 19 since the last Convention, and there is even a tendency to overemphasize difficulties of recruiting.

Our Party fraction and the Party Sections will have to take more seriously the question of building the Party. We feel that once they will become more conscious of the possibilities for recruiting, they will find hundreds of railroad workers ready for the Party.

In heavy metal, we have made some headway. In a number of key shops, in Sections 7, 19 and 26, we have organized Party nuclei. Let us examine the work of one of our older nuclei in this industry.

This nucleus operates in a basic war plant employing 5,000 workers and is a little over three years old. Since its organization it has always come forward with the necessary Party firmness and clarity in raising issues before the workers, reacting to their conditions in a way that resulted in the growth of the nucleus from three Y.C.L. members at the time of its organization to two units today, one in the Party with 16 members, and one in the Y.C.L. with 15 members. The comrades in this unit were always on the spot in reacting to problems through leaflets, shop papers and other agitational material. It came forward without any delay on the war

question around a specific burning issue, thereby becoming a greater factor in a general movement which helped to destroy the effectiveness of a certain group of warmongers.

Guided by the line and decisions of the Seventh World Congress, this nucleus paid a great deal of attention to work in the trade unions, with the result that in many of them, our Party members are in the leadership and have drawn much closer to them many non-Party leaders of these trade unions. However, while making headway in the trade unions, this nucleus recently has slowed down in reacting to political issues. The result has been that recruiting has of late been negligible.

What conclusions can we draw from our concentration work?

1. That, applying the line of the Open Letter, we penetrated important sections of the working class with whom we had had no previous contact.

2. As a result, our influence among these workers has increased, and our Party has grown.

3. We must note, however, that serious disproportion between the tremendous increase in our influence among basic workers, and the growth of the Party.

These weaknesses, in our opinion, are due to insufficient alertness to the problems and grievances of the workers, which in many instances resulted in failure to develop struggles around the most immediate issues confronting them; an underestimation of the role of the Party as the political leader of the working class in all of its struggles, resulting in failure to develop the political campaigns of the Party, such as the struggle against war and fascism and the building of the Farmer-Labor Party; an underestimation of the readiness of workers to join the Party, with the consequent failure to take advantage of the possibilities existing to bring the best workers into our ranks. Last, but not least, our Party as a whole has not displayed the initiative for work in the basic industries in building the Party that could be noted immediately after the Open Letter.

At the time of our last District Convention our membership in basic industry represented, as already stated, about 10 per cent of the total membership. Today, this all-important portion of our membership represents only 6 per cent of the total. It follows, therefore, that further and greater success of our work in concentration depends to a large degree upon the education of the Party membership as a whole to the basic tasks as outlined in the Open Letter and in the Seventh World Congress decisions.

SHOP NUCLEI

In the early part of our report we stated the number of nuclei

and the number of Party members in them. What is necessary to state here is: (1) The increase of shop nuclei by 201 during this period, (2) That 2,957 members in the present 285 nuclei work among one quarter of a million workers as compared to the 60,000 workers among whom the members of the 84 nuclei worked 27 months ago.

We now issue 101 shop papers, a little over 50 per cent of which appear regularly, compared to 12 regular shop papers at that time. We succeeded in building Party nuclei in such important plants as in the auto industry in Tarrytown, textile in Yonkers, and in other important places.

The increase of nuclei in basic industries is 28, with a membership of 221, working among 80,000 workers, as compared to eight nuclei operating among 7,500 workers at the time of our last Convention. All this is an achievement; but, in analyzing the growth of our shop nuclei we see that the growth of *basic* nuclei is entirely too slow as compared to the growth of shop nuclei in general. The total number of shop nuclei among industrial workers is 109, compared to 176 among the white collar and professional workers. This shows that we have been entirely too slow in building the Party among industrial workers in the shops and factories, especially among workers in basic industry.

Now as to the quality of work in our shop nuclei. The 253,577 workers that our Party nuclei work among have the following composition: native, 135,075; Negro, 12,134; women, 75,078; youth, 29,095. Of these, 46,275 workers are in trade unions. 74,114 are in company unions. When we examine the work of our nuclei in the light of our present tasks, we must ask: to what extent are the nuclei factors in building the trade union movement? To what extent are we drawing Negro workers into our Party? Are our Party nuclei factors in organizing the youth, women—all of these sections—around their economic needs, making special approaches to each category as necessary, and as a result of these activities, building the Party?

An example of good work is a unit in a metal shop of 200 workers. The unit consists entirely of basic workers in the shop. This nucleus has issued a shop paper regularly, almost since its inception, has been active in building the union within the shop, and was a factor in this union's recent affiliation with the A. F. of L. During the past two years the comrades were successful in having the entire shop closed down for the May Day parade. The comrades have succeeded in building the *Daily Worker* distribution in the shop, now selling 35 copies daily. Discussions in the unit are regular and are linked up with shop life. Open unit meetings are frequent.

Literature sales, too, are good, the comrades taking literature, not merely for their own use, but for distribution and sale to their fellow workers. The Party membership of this nucleus has increased during this period by about 70 per cent. The comrades have carried through a number of small struggles around the grievances of the workers. The weakness of this unit is that it has not yet been instrumental in developing struggles of a major character. While this nucleus shows improved work, even in this case the growth of the Party is entirely too slow, a characteristic of the majority of our industrial shop nuclei at this time.

We can also cite the 148th Street shop in traction, a nucleus that is doing splendid work in building the trade union among the traction workers. This nucleus was cited at the February, 1935, conference of our Party. This nucleus is still one of the better nuclei in the District. However, in the past year and a half, the nucleus has gained only two or three recruits.

All told, our shop nuclei in the District sell some 881 issues of the *Daily Worker* daily, among these quarter of a million workers, and 1,305 issues of the *Sunday Worker*—a miserably low figure. The recruiting of Negro workers by the shop nuclei is very insignificant, and with the exception of probably two or three nuclei, we cannot report any real attempt to organize the youth around their special problems. Insofar as realizing the necessity for building the Party on the basis of trade union work and our revolutionary program, the nuclei do not measure up sufficiently to present-day requirements.

We can cite a Party nucleus in a men's clothing shop of 800 workers. This unit is three and a half years old. At the time of its organization, it had four members. The comrades developed the theory that the workers in that shop had no grievances, and that, hence, there was no need to react to any problems. The unit did not come forth with any Party agitation on economic or political issues. It did not utilize its contact with 800 workers to develop the movement for the Labor Party, although knowing that the Amalgamated Clothing workers had gone on record for it. The result is that the comrades are not known to the workers in the shop as militants who show by their example that they are fighters in the interests of the working class. This nucleus has increased in the past three years by one. Can anybody expect such a Party organization to grow?

The much-spoken-of unit in Majestic was growing at a rapid pace as a result of splendid activity on the part of the comrades. The Party unit stood out as a fighter in the interests of the workers, in building the union and winning demands. The unit came forward continuously before the workers with Party literature, and,

as a result, had grown to 35, and also built up a large nucleus of the Young Communist League. In the recent period, due to some difficulties in the shop, and a slowing down in alertness and Communist activity on the part of the comrades, this nucleus had gone down to 12. Quite recently, however, as a result of the last strike, the unit recruited four additional members.

There is also the example of a nucleus in a smoking pipe factory, which, as a result of activity of the Party members in a strike about a year and a half ago, grew in a period of a few months from a small group to a nucleus of 17. The workers knew that the Party was the main builder of their union and the leader of the strike in that shop. However, after this strike was lost, in spite of the good work of the comrades on the economic field, in spite of the recruiting done, only one comrade remained in the Party.

What do these facts show?

1. That while it is a prerequisite in our shop work to deal with the economic problems of the workers, develop struggles, and build economic organization, this must go hand in hand with the building of the Communist Party in these shops and factories, as a conscious revolutionary force.

2. That in order to achieve this objective, the education of our members on the position of our Party on all questions confronting the workers is of primary importance.

3. That the political development of our membership as revolutionists is decisive in leading struggles of the workers, in building the Party, and in retaining the workers that come in. If the Party members in the Majestic shop nucleus and in the smoking pipe shop had received a Communist education, they certainly would all have remained in the Party, irrespective of the outcome of the situation in the shop.

The District Committee, the County Committees, and the Sections, will have to consider this question most seriously as the decisive factor in building our Party in the shops, in winning the hundreds of thousands of workers with whom we are in contact.

THE WORK OF TRADE UNION FRACTIONS

While Comrade Rose Wortis, in her report, dealt quite adequately with our trade union work, we wish here to state that the 8,649 Party members who are in trade unions are distributed in about 300 locals within the A. F. of L. This membership is now playing a tremendous role in the whole trade union movement. If our Party realizes, and we are sure it does, the importance of trade union work, especially in this period of struggle against reac-

tion and war, then we must undertake without delay, a concerted drive to unionize the remaining 5,787 Party members eligible for trade union membership. This would add powerful force to the trade union movement.

There is a great improvement in our Party insofar as realizing the importance of trade union work is concerned. Many of our Section Committees have been quite successful in strengthening the trade union movement, in giving guidance and leadership to the fractions which still suffer from a lack of Party consciousness in their day-to-day work in the trade unions. Here, too, the weakness can be greatly overcome by real Party education in the fractions, by the Section Committees devoting more attention to trade union work. In this connection, Section 2, the Harlem division, Section 12, and Section 24, stand out with their participation in the work of the trade union fractions. Improvement can also be noted in this connection in Sections 1, 6, 22, 25, and in a number of other Sections. The Section Committees, with the assistance of the District Committee, will have to develop an intensive campaign for Party education in the fractions and shop nuclei, and thereby promote political consciousness among hundreds of thousands of workers who are moving toward the Party's position.

INDUSTRIAL UNITS

In order to eliminate some of the weaknesses of the Party fractions in the trade unions and to make it possible for our Party members fully to activate themselves as Communists, we proceeded to build industrial units.

We noticed that many of the best Party activists in the trade unions were unable to pay any attention to, or participate to any appreciable degree in, the work of the street units. Some Party fractions in trade unions were poorly organized, met very irregularly, and were unable to control the activities of the comrades in their respective industries. On the other hand, many comrades were active in neighborhood work and in organizations, but had no orientation towards the shop and the union.

We began to recruit new types of workers from the trade union movement, workers used to a certain type of life and method within an organization. These workers were unable to adapt themselves within our Party due to the poor inner life of the units. This, in addition to the urgent necessity for increasing the rate of building shop nuclei, prompted us to organize industrial units.

It should be clear that the industrial units are a transitory form of organization. Their task is to build shop nuclei, except, of course,

in industries where nuclei are not practicable, such as building. As a result of developing industrial units, we can report a marked improvement in recruiting. Fluctuation is being reduced, literature sales have increased, and in some of the units there is an improvement in the distribution of the *Daily Worker*. In many of these units we can mark improved Communist activity in connection with trade union work.

For example, the fur industrial units recruited 67 workers in the last three months, something that the fraction did not do over a much longer period of time. The fur units have a 90 per cent attendance. They have a much better political life, connecting political questions with the problems of their trade.

The unit of the Painters' Local 905 was able to place many pamphlets, as well as the *Daily Worker*, on sale at every union meeting. This unit developed a discussion in the union on the May Day campaign, and, together with the Socialists, drew the local into the May Day demonstration. As a consequence of these activities, the local went on record for a Farmer-Labor Party. This resulted in the growth of the unit from 28 members to approximately 48.

While we cite these instances of the many positive features in the industrial units, we must state at the same time that so far none of these units have been instrumental in building shop nuclei. We must guard against the industrial unit carrying over the purely trade unionist approach that is so much in evidence in our trade union fractions.

It is necessary to emphasize that the establishment of a new form of organization is not in itself sufficient. Here, too, the political education of our membership will be decisive in the improvement of our work.

NEIGHBORHOOD WORK

Now, as to the neighborhoods. We want to state at the outset that basically there are no differences between the branch and the street unit. Both have the same political task.

The older type of street unit consisted of members, many of whom devoted their major time to work in trade unions and mass organizations, instead of to work in the territory. Consequently, the units remained with limited forces for neighborhood activity.

Now that the Party is more alert to the political issues of the masses in the neighborhoods, our tasks call for greater participation in the state, the municipality, and in the Congressional and Assembly Districts. We have to remember that we are entering the Election Campaign this year with full consciousness that we are coming forward before ever larger masses of people as the Party that is offer-

ing the best solution to their problems. The old street units, in most cases, were not able to come forward sufficiently as the political organizations in the neighborhoods.

In criticising the weaknesses of our street units in general, we should make it clear that some of them have been made into well functioning Party organizations in the territories. Let us take just one example.

A street unit in the territory of Section 24 has a membership of about 40. Two months ago the membership was 20. This unit has succeeded in achieving a regular attendance of about 95 per cent. By colonizing forces in a neighborhood Settlement House and two clubs, it developed a movement around the issue of firetraps and drew in a number of mass organizations, with the unit as a direct participant in the movement. The discussions are on a much higher political plane as a result of its work in the territory, and with the activization of a maximum of its membership, the unit has developed a good inner life, a friendly and social life. Many other units have developed neighborhood activities and are gradually reaching the numerical strength of a branch.

In the main, however, as stated, the street units are weak. In order to improve our work, we began forming branches within Assembly Districts. This should lead to an improved inner life, if the needs of the masses in the neighborhoods become the major concern of the branch. This improvement in form should also result in better attendance at branch meetings, increased dues payments, reduced fluctuation, and better recruiting.

The branches, a combination of the membership of two or three units, having a greater number of members at their disposal, should be in a better position to elect a more able leadership. The political discussions in these branches should be on a higher level. They should be in a much better position to distribute their membership among the various organizations in the neighborhood, to develop and lead struggles on local issues.

At present these branches present to our Party some very burning problems, proving that, while adequate forms of organization are important, this in itself is not enough. In order too improve our work, hand in hand with organization must come an all-important single factor, that is, the politicalization of our membership.

THE WORK OF THE BRANCHES

While a number of branches are making good beginnings in neighborhood work, in developing political issues, in distributing their membership in the neighborhood organizations, and in general

planning activity among the masses, we must state that the majority are not yet consolidated, in spite of the fact that they have been in existence some five months. The inner political life is still extremely poor, the neighborhood work weak, and, as a result, no mass movements are being developed. Branch attendance, recruiting, and dues payments are entirely unsatisfactory. In other words, the branches are not yet the factors that we expected them to be in the neighborhoods. Another shortcoming on the part of the membership and leadership in the majority of the branches is that they look upon the branch too much as a social center. The comrades are making efforts to develop social life, but they expect the people to come to them instead of going out into the neighborhoods, reaching the masses. This makes for lack of discipline and laxity in carrying out assignments. The majority of our branches do not yet plan their activities thoroughly. In the main, they base their work on the weekly directives from the Section Committees, an orientation that does not guarantee continuity in planned work, that tends to distract the branch leadership from developing initiative. The branches *can* develop into really effective organizations.

This can be seen by examples of some of the better branches. The members of the branch in Coney Island were actively engaged in unemployed work even before the branch was formed. As a result, there are now good beginnings of a community movement around a precinct in their neighborhood. This branch is issuing leaflets in large quantities dealing with various issues of the neighborhood. As a result of the good work the discussions in the branch are on a much higher level than in the average branch. Attendance at meetings range from 80 per cent to 95 per cent. Open meetings are attended by from 250 to 500. In this branch the executive built up a group system which is functioning more or less satisfactorily, with the captains working consistently on attendance and on the collection of dues and the Red Fighting Fund. Dues payments of the branch reach 90 per cent. This activity has resulted in the recruiting of 51 new members in the space of four months.

A branch on the Middle West Side (Section 18) has developed struggles to the point where it has practically built up an unemployed local. This branch has an improved inner life. It is growing and has checked fluctuation. Another branch, in Section 3, as a result of its active participation in the building service strike, built up a Party nucleus of 8 in one of the largest buildings in New York.

A branch on the lower West Side was instrumental in organizing a school association among Italian people on the issue of overcrowding, on the demand for more teachers, etc. About 80 to 90

families are organized in this group. The group has progressed and others are being planned.

These are some positive examples of branches that clearly point to the possibilities of improving our mass work in the neighborhoods. The great majority, however, are not yet consolidated; are not yet clear as to their tasks in the neighborhood; are leading a poor inner life, developing no struggles. We daresay that about 75 per cent of our branches have a poor attendance, at most 60 per cent; are not developing discussions on a plane that would improve the political understanding of the membership. We have examined many branches and in most cases find that they have not yet solved the problems of attendance, of distribution of forces in the neighborhood organizations, of mass work generally.

At the meetings of many of these branches, we find some 60 to 80 Communists who surely read in the press about international and local events. We feel sure that they discuss these events and express their opinions about them. We feel sure that, as individuals, they think socially and politically. Yet, when they come to the branch of the Party, they stop discussing these events and issues and begin to worry about what to do in the branch. For the branches have not yet become a place where good political discussions are developed.

We have some 60,000 houses in the City of New York that violate the Multiple Dwelling Law passed by the state legislature. They are occupied by 1,750,000 people. This is a great issue that our Party can raise among these million and three-quarter people, organize them around it, develop struggles and build the Party. There is a United Parents' Organization in the City of New York which at present has 212 local organizations with an enrolled membership of 120,000 families. These organizations are of key importance. Yet, to date, many of them are under the influence of Tammany Hall and other local politicians. Why should not these civic organizations be under the influence of the Communist Party?

These issues, if properly dealt with by our branches, may become a powerful weapon in our hands for developing the united front, the Labor Party, for the growth of our Party.

As for the groups, this matter should be simplified to the greatest extent possible. All that is necessary at this time is to have a captain for five, six, or eight comrades living close to one another, for that captain to visit the members each week before the meeting, collecting dues if a comrade is unable to attend the meeting.

Are we perfectly clear as to how the branches should function? This has been discussed many times in the District and Section Committees of the Party, and in the main there is clarity in the leading bodies as to how the branches should function. The trouble is that

the leading bodies are not giving sufficient guidance to the comrades of the branches at the critical period.

It is necessary at this time to slow down the further building of branches and to reduce the membership in each branch to no more than 50 or 60. Section Committees should assign the most experienced people to work with the branch executives. The executive committees should be developed politically to a point where they can take full initiative in dealing with the problems of the toiling population in the neighborhoods. This improved political quality of branch leadership would bring about real discussion, would greatly improve recruiting, check fluctuation, and bring about a much better attendance.

Our Party in Harlem stands out in building the unemployed councils, having a membership of about 1,000. Sections 5, 6, 10, 18 and 27 are proceeding with greater consciousness than heretofore in involving the Party membership in the struggles of the unemployed and other neighborhood issues.

Good beginnings along these lines are also to be noted in Sections 11, 14, 15, 19, and 26. In some of our out-of-town Sections, such as 9 and 21, while the work is not of the same character, our Party is beginning to make headway in tackling the issues of the population.

It will be necessary for the District to strengthen the Commission on Housing, on parents' work, and especially the Research Commission, so that we will be able in the future to provide the necessary information to our Party units and branches, and help them more in this work.

As a result of improved work, the percentage of recruiting among women is greatly increased. Insofar as the special problems of women are concerned, however, they are still mainly relegated to the women's organizations, which have developed struggles around the high cost of living, rent, etc. A commission has now been established in the District for the purpose of developing in the counties and Sections the necessary apparatus and awareness to the political importance of this work.

A few words as to youth work. While we find that in many Sections the relations between the top committees of the Party and the League have improved, the importance of organizing the youth has not yet been brought down to the lower ranks of the Party. This is exemplified by the fact that during youth month, when discussions were held in our units and branches, in most cases, no discussion could be developed. This shows clearly that our Party membership is not alive to the problems of the youth and is not

conscious of the importance of winning them over to the revolutionary movement.

How can we hope to lead a really effective struggle and defeat reaction in the United States if the Communists are unable to discuss among themselves the problems of such important and decisive sections of the population as youth, Negro, and women!

Can this be solved by decisions and instructions? Of course not. It can be solved only by the same type of approach that can solve all of the other problems raised above.

LEADERSHIP AND METHODS OF WORK

Now let us proceed to the questions of leadership and methods of work. Our District Committee has improved to quite a degree in its functioning and in giving leadership to the Party.

During this period, the District Committee, under the guidance and with the active participation of the Central Committee, was more alert to issues; took up, more than in the past, legislative measures affecting the lives and well-being of the working masses.

Our District Committee has met regularly and has established better relations with the Section Committees than in the past. We were to a great extent instrumental in building up a Section leadership of a more mature political character. We must, however, state that we did not fully adapt ourselves to the present-day requirements of leadership, nor did we succeed in drawing in and developing all of the shop workers elected to our District Committee at the last Convention. We still have not found the best methods of giving encouragement and assistance to the Sections in helping them develop the independent initiative and responsibility that are so necessary at this time. Our Sections, units and branches still depend too much on directives from the top. We still permit too many detailed problems to be taken up by the District, problems which could be dealt with by the Sections, units, fractions, etc.

We hope that the County Committee will help to improve on this, that through them, the Sections, units, and branches will get more direct assistance in a way that will encourage and develop their initiative and activity.

We have pursued a conscious policy of Americanizing the leadership of our Party. As contrasted with the last District Convention, *today 45 per cent* of our Section organizers are native-born, as compared with the 100 per cent foreign-born in 1934.

While this is an improvement there is still much to be done along other lines in all leading committees as well as the lower ranks. It is clear that since we now have, relatively speaking, a mass Party

in our District, it is impossible for us to tackle all the problems of the daily practical work as we did in the past. Our Party must now raise the question of leadership on the basis of our present tasks in a much sharper manner and must definitely connect the question of leadership with the methods of work pursued up to the present.

The same holds true for the Section Committees of our Party. Improved though they are, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for them to cope fully with all of the problems of activizing Party nuclei, units, branches, etc., around the program of our Party.

It is therefore necessary at this time to broaden out the leadership of our Party. It is necessary to draw thousands of our Party members into active participation and leadership, both in the Party organizations and in mass work.

Comrades, what is the central solution to all these problems that we have raised? In our opinion, the solution lies in the education of our Party membership, education as to the Party's mass work in struggle for the immediate demands of the masses against war and fascism; education on the revolutionary solution to all the problems of the working class offered in the program of our Party.

It is necessary at this time to change drastically our past methods of work. In the past, we have tended to depend too much upon forms of organization, assignments and checkup, as the solution for our weaknesses. While it is essential in the life of a firmly organized Communist Party that decisions shall be executed by the committees and membership, experiences show that directives alone will not make for the growth of our Party and its improvement in mass work. It is necessary to adopt those methods of work which will make for a life in our Party organization that will be attractive to new people. It is necessary to adopt those methods that will politicize our day-to-day activity among the masses, at home, in the neighborhoods, shops, trade unions and mass organizations.

In all committees from the District down, routine work will have to be relegated to individual comrades or commissions. In committee meetings we must devote most of our time to discussion of vital problems of the working class, political issues, trade union problems, unemployment must be discussed in the light of our revolutionary program! Only thus will we be able to raise the whole political level of our membership. Only thus will we be able to develop ever greater numbers of leaders for the mass struggles to come!

THE NEED OF EDUCATING THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP

We have taken steps in training Party cadres. We have increased the number of our training schools in the District and in the Sec-

tions. This year we had two full-time training schools, with 70 students, as against one school in previous years. The same holds true for many Sections. There has been an improvement, not only in the increased number of Party members who received training, but in the quality of our schools as well. While it is necessary to improve further our schools so that we can take more of our best Party members and give them a higher theoretical training, the main problem before our Party at this time is that of achieving the politicalization of our membership on a mass scale.

Our leadership cannot at present cope adequately with the manifold tasks. Our leadership must be broadened out. Additional forces for leadership must be drawn from the ranks of our Party.

How many members of our Party can at this time discuss our position on the coming election campaign with all of the complicated problems involved? How many Party members can discuss the Negro liberation movement and the Party's position on the Negro question as a whole? How many of our members can discuss clearly the issues that face the young generation of America? At this time only a comparatively small group of comrades can be depended upon to deal with these questions. It is clear that we will not be able to organize the broadest masses in the struggle against fascism and war, for the Farmer-Labor Party, unless these tasks are understood by more than a small group of Party leaders in the District and in the Sections.

This Convention should go on record for a drastic change in our methods of work and for a real educational drive throughout our Party.

Our Party leadership in the Sections and in the District must take full responsibility for the education of our membership, for politicalizing our mass work, by actually going down and showing the membership how to work. Oftentimes our comrades come to the District office for forces. All too often do we hear the cry, "Lack of forces!" Comrades, these forces are among us. They are to be found in hundreds, if not thousands, in our Party. We must search for them, educate them, and advance them to leadership.

If this is done, then the problems of attendance, growth, fluctuation, and assignments will be well on the way to solution.

Comrades, the working class and the toiling people of America are definitely moving in struggles against oppression and reaction. This is exemplified by the ever growing industrial union bloc within the A. F. of L. by the growing sentiment for a Farmer-Labor Party! While this powerful upsurge of the toiling masses may not yet take a clear, revolutionary form, it is moving increasingly along lines of a decisive break with subservience to the parties of capital,

in the direction of independent political action of the workers and farmers. It is the task of our Party to bring the utmost clarity into this movement.

Comrades, the great struggles of the American working class are ahead of us. In these struggles the American proletariat will look to the leadership of a revolutionary Communist Party. The forces of reaction are organizing their attack. We must lead the masses to defeat this attack, comrades. We are in a position to build a powerful Communist Party—to forge the unity of the masses for the defeat of reaction and fascism.

This will require tremendous work on our part and great sacrifices, comrades. But is work an obstacle to Communists? Are sacrifices an obstacle to Communists? Surely not, comrades. We can draw our lessons and inspirations from the great leaders of the October Revolution—Lenin and Stalin. We can draw our inspiration from the great heroes of the working class, Dimitroff, Thaelmann, Prestes, Rakosi, and others.

It is our task to lead the toiling masses of our country against reaction and fascism. It is our task to free the working class!

With Marxist-Leninist knowledge at our command, with a clear revolutionary objective before us, and under the leadership of the Central Committee, let us go forward!

On to the building of a mass Farmer-Labor Party! On to the building of a powerful Communist Party! On to a workers' and farmers' America!

On the Communist Approach to Zionism

A REPLY TO A MEMORANDUM

[We have received from the Jewish Bureau of the Pittsburgh District of the Communist Party a memorandum on the question of the recent events in Palestine, in which the comrades point out that these events have endangered our united front movement in organizations involving Jewish influential bodies. The memorandum raises the question whether the emphasis as to the main danger to the Palestinian masses should not be placed on British imperialism, which should be charged with the whole responsibility for the Palestinian happenings.]

Below, we present a statement by the Jewish Bureau of the Central Committee, giving the correct approach to the problem.—
EDITORS.]

THE memorandum of the Jewish Bureau of the Pittsburgh District states in part:

“It is our definite opinion that we must concretely and clearly place the whole responsibility for the situation in Palestine on the policies of British imperialism. . . . That while we expose Zionism as the tool of the Jewish bourgeoisie whose policy of race discrimination is playing into the hands of English imperialism and misleads the Jewish masses, we must center our attack on the *main* enemy of the Arabian and Jewish masses which is British imperialism and call for the unity of the Arabian and Jewish masses to struggle against this main enemy of British imperialism and its agents.”

The cited passage from the memorandum raises a number of serious problems in connection with the Palestinian question that call for a thorough enlightenment in order to make clear our approach to the question of Zionism and the struggle taking place in Palestine.

The Communist position on Palestine was outlined at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern by Comrade Hadyar, who stated:

“The Arab masses are filled with a burning hatred towards the Arab capitalists, feudalists, towards the Zionist bourgeoisie, which has taken upon itself the gendarme role of imperialist oppression. The struggle against the Zionist bourgeoisie is something which can be directly understood by almost all the oppressed social strata of the Arab people. This struggle is taking place daily, and is basically an anti-imperialist struggle. By supporting this struggle we must lead, extend and direct it along the proper channels, towards the struggle against the main enemy, against imperialism.

“We hate the Jewish Zionist bourgeoisie, but we extend a fraternal hand to the Jewish toilers for a joint struggle against imperialism, against Zionism, against the bitterest enemies of the Arab and Jewish peoples in Palestine.

"The Communist Party is building the Arab national people's front against imperialism and against Zionism. It actively works among the Jewish toiling masses in order to liberate them from the influence of the counter-revolutionary party of the Jewish Zionist capitalists, in order to draw the toiling Jews into the national emancipation struggle of the Arab masses."

This correct approach towards the situation in Palestine has regrettably not always been carried out without mistakes by our Party in Palestine. Thus, in a leaflet published last December, no differentiation was made between the rich Jewish Zionist bourgeoisie and the toiling masses. However, that leaflet does not constitute the line of the Communist Party in Palestine, and has since then been corrected.

In discussing the present events in Palestine, we must have in mind the national liberation character of the struggle in that country, and our attitude must be the attitude of Communists towards a national liberation movement in a colonial country—the attitude of supporting such a movement.

At the same time, we must take into consideration the three and a half to four hundred thousand Jews living in that country and the attempt being made by the feudalists, by Nazi and Italian fascist agitators, as well as by British imperialists, to turn the movement into a race struggle, into pogrom on the Jewish people. In this respect, the role of Zionism must be made very clear. Zionism is playing into the hands of the reactionary forces. Not only is it playing into the hands of reaction, but is itself reactionary to the core.

Zionism is reactionary in that it fosters racial division and oppression. It divides the workers according to race, discriminating against Arab workers and barring them from the labor unions. That is called the "conquest of labor"—the policy carried out by the reactionary reformist Histadruth (Hebrew United Trade Unions of Palestine). Zionism dispossesses Arab peasants from the land and calls the policy, the "conquest of land".

The Zionist policy in Palestine makes for pogroms, by its racial discrimination policy which is being supported by British imperialism. This policy has poisoned the atmosphere of Palestine, making that country fertile ground for provocateurs of all kinds, particularly British imperialist provocateurs, who wish to divert the anti-imperialist struggle into channels of anti-Jewish struggles. This is made easier by the fact that the Zionist leaders, who constitute a small minority among the Jews, presume to speak in the name of all the Jews.

Zionism is reactionary in that it is and always has been a tool of imperialism. It supports and bases itself on imperialism. It preaches separation of the Jewish workers from the other workers in all the

nations in which they find themselves. This diverts their attention from local struggles for improved conditions, and for the struggle for socialism as the only scientific solution of the national question.

The Zionist leaders contend that they are "using" British imperialism for Zionist purposes; actually, however, Zionism has become the tool, the very policeman, of British imperialism.

On the issue of the main danger and the shouldering of full responsibility for the recent happenings in Palestine, the Pittsburgh comrades are here making a mechanical separation of Zionist policies from British imperialism, by presenting British imperialism alone as the cause of the race clashes in Palestine under the old maxim of "divide and rule". We must in no way mitigate the participation of Zionism as a conscious policy and program in the imperialist designs of Great Britain. When we speak of the main danger and the full guilt for the happenings in Palestine, we must present the combined imperialist forces against which the Arabian and Jewish toilers of Palestine must fight: the British imperialists—backed by Zionism. It is in this sense of the combined forces of imperialism that Comrade Hadyar presented the need for struggle against imperialism as the main enemy. We would be weakening our entire defense against the efforts of imperialism to bring Palestine completely under its heel, if we blinded ourselves in the slightest to Zionism's conscious role as accomplice of the British imperialist robber policy.

Zionism fights for the status quo in the Near East, for a continuation of the British Mandate over Palestine. It demands that Great Britain, by force, hold the Arab majority in subjection. It is at this very moment agitating against self-determination and democratic self-government in Palestine, which the colonially oppressed masses in that land are struggling to force British imperialism to concede.

We have said enough about the reactionary and imperialist character of Zionism to make it clear that the struggle against Zionism, a special duty of Jewish Communists everywhere, is a struggle against imperialism. The Jewish comrades in the United States must wage a struggle against Zionist ideology, the imperialist weapon of the Jewish bourgeoisie. It is therefore clear that there can be no soft pedalling in our attitude towards the Zionist movement.

On the question of immigration, we must show that Communists are for free immigration. But we must confront the Zionist accusers with the fact that the present Jewish immigration into Palestine is not a free, but a selective immigration, for the purpose of strengthening British rule in Palestine. It is a conquest colonization, not a free immigration. When, therefore, we come out in opposition to the Palestine immigration, we come out against the present Zionist immigration.

The Communists have traditionally and by the very nature of the Marxian-Leninist principles upheld the right of immigration and asylum. We fight the present Zionist-controlled immigration, which is intended to bolster the reactionary purposes of Zionism in Palestine. We Communists desire to broaden out in a thorough-going manner, the right of the oppressed and persecuted Jews in countries such as Germany, Poland, Rumania, and elsewhere, to emigrate without strictures, not only to Palestine, but also to the United States. In this connection, we emphasize the struggle that our Party is conducting against the reactionary anti-foreign born policy of William Green, who has recently offered a plank to the Republican Party convention, favoring deportation of foreign-born. Let us refute the lying allegation of the Zionist leaders against us on the issue of immigration by countering with our policy of immigration and asylum as against the restrictive policy of Zionism.

We must, however, in our struggle against Zionism always emphasize that we have in mind the broad Jewish masses, whom the Zionist leaders are inciting against us by pointing to the Jewish blood that is flowing in Palestine—blood, Arabian as well as Jewish, that is the outcome of the criminal adventurism of the Zionist policy. In the past, we have made the mistake that our struggles against Zionism took on a form which made the impression of a struggle against the Jews living in Palestine. This was not correct. We must make clear, even more than we have, that Communists are not against the Jewish masses living at the present time in Palestine; that the Communists are fighting for the lives and the interests of the Jewish toiling masses everywhere—in Palestine, as in other capitalist countries where they are being oppressed by imperialism, anti-Semitism, fascism, etc. It is in connection with this that our Jewish Bureau has formulated a program of democratic demands that would immediately improve relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. These demands were formulated in the statement issued by the Jewish Bureau on the events in Palestine and in a number of articles printed in the *Morning Freiheit*. The main features of these demands are the following:

1. The responsible Jewish leaders of mass organizations in Palestine shall commit themselves publicly to the declaration that the Jews are not out to capture or dominate Palestine, that their aim is to live in peace and neighborly friendship with the Arabs.

2. The responsible Jewish leaders shall declare that they are in favor of a free Palestine, not dominated by British imperialism, but ruled by a democratically elected parliament, with the fullest freedom for the entire population and with guaranteed national rights for the Jews.

3. The leaders of the Jewish organizations in Palestine shall

at once demonstrate their friendship toward the Arabs by admitting Arab workers into the trade unions and Arab farm laborers into the tenant organizations, renouncing the criminal scabbing policy of "capturing labor".

4. The responsible Jewish leaders shall declare that from now on Jews will buy land in Palestine only with the consent of those living upon that land and cultivating it. This will put an end to the shameful and criminal policy of "capturing the land".

5. Jewish immigration into Palestine shall be freed from Zionist domination. At present it is *not immigration* but *colonization* for the purpose of capturing the country. The Zionists select as immigrants either rich Jews or toilers who are misled and ready to put themselves at the disposal of Zionists and their policy. Jewish immigration into Palestine must be placed under the supervision of organizations representing the mass of Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

We believe that this program, when properly explained and popularized among the Jewish masses, gives us a powerful weapon to combat the Zionist slander that Communists are against the Jewish masses living in Palestine. We must make it clear, that we—as against the ruinous Zionist policy—are very much concerned with the lives of the Jews living in Palestine and that we are making practical proposals to eliminate the causes of struggle raging now in Palestine and make it possible for the Jews and Arabs to live amicably together.

There is no doubt that the Zionist propaganda has succeeded in influencing thousands of workers and toilers, as well as a section of the leadership of certain mass organizations which were coming our way, on the question of the united front and the people's front. It is our task to prove to these leaders that, while we are combating Zionism, we are fighting for the interests of the Jewish toiling masses everywhere, and that we are even ready to make united fronts with those Zionists that are willing to struggle for the interests of the Jewish masses in this country or abroad.

We hope that this letter will clear up the confusion which was evident in the memorandum submitted by the comrades of the Pittsburgh District Jewish Bureau and will help them understand more clearly the tasks before them.

We are in agreement with that part of the memorandum which proposes that the Central Committee should issue a statement on the situation in Palestine. Comrade Earl Browder appearing on June 8 at a big mass meeting in New York made such a statement in the name of the Party, which appeared in the press.

J. SULTAN

*For the Jewish Bureau of the
Central Committee, C.P.U.S.A.*



PROFESSIONALS SPEAK

CREATIVE AMERICA: ITS RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL SECURITY,
by MARY VAN KLEECK, Covici-Friede. \$3.00.

Reviewed by GRACE HUTCHINS

PROFESSIONALS have been organizing during the past five years as an important sector in the broad anti-fascist people's front that is developing in the United States. As the economic crisis and depression deepened, salaried professional workers suffered unemployment, part-time work and salary cuts, while self-employed professionals found that increasing numbers of the population were unable to take advantage of professional services.

As a direct result of this situation, organization among professionals has advanced, until today about 250,000 professional workers are members of trade unions or of organizations with acknowledged protective purposes.

One of most important among these newer organizations is the Inter-Professional Association (formerly the Inter-Professional Association for Social Insurance), of which Mary van Kleeck, director of Industrial Studies for the Russell Sage Foundation, is the national chairman. Organized early in 1934, it now has chapters and organizing committees in a score of cities throughout the country. Affiliated with local I.P.A. chapters are local units of such national organizations as the American Federation of Teachers, the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians, artists' and writers' unions, and social work groups.

Joining with industrial workers and farmers in support of the Lundeen Workers' Social Insurance Bill and then drafting the more complete Frazier-Lundeen Bill (S. 3475), the Inter-Professional Association has played a notable part in the campaign for genuine social insurance in the country at large. Its purpose is to unite individuals and organizations to promote inter-professional cooperation for the organization of professional workers in relationship with the labor movement and to develop support for a broad social-economic program for the professionals, of which a part shall be an inclusive program of social insurance.

It is in line with this purpose of the Inter-Professional Association, although the organization as such is not brought forward in the book, that Miss van Kleeck, its national chairman, has now written *Creative America: Its Resources for Social Security*. It is the first book to present the viewpoint of professionals

on their relationship with the labor movement and as such it is a much-needed volume. Its purpose is stated as "an effort by a social worker, or more accurately, perhaps, an economist in social work, to find an answer to America's present bewildered questions about the path to be taken toward a more secure economic future out of the present and past insecurity of recurrent industrial depressions".

Defining creative America as "America at work, supplying material and cultural needs and developing a society which should be capable of insuring opportunity and security for the common people", Miss van Kleeck distinguished throughout the book between creative forces, on the one hand, and possessive forces, on the other. Possession she defines as "ownership". "In its economic sense", she states, "it refers primarily to ownership of natural resources and the instruments and means of production, but not to personal possession for the use of the individual".

In a brief historical summary of recurring depressions in American economic development since 1796, the author sketches the railroad expansion of the 19th century, the closing of the geographical frontier in 1890, and the dismissal of great numbers of workers who had been brought to the United States in the periods of labor shortage. The continuous conflict between "property rights and human rights" is illustrated by recent decisions of the U. S. Supreme Court against New Deal legislation and by the use of federal and state troops to break strikes. The curbs upon civil liberties have become more numerous as possessive interests have grown more powerful, until today democratic rights are in jeopardy in the United States.

The Swope Plan and the more recent "platform for American industry", presented by the National Association of Manufacturers, are analyzed in a chapter on big business and its plans for America. While opposing trade union organization for labor, possessive forces have entrenched themselves with a strong economic organization, ready to attack the basis of the civil liberties which the American people have gained for themselves in long struggle. Workers are without tools; farmers are without land; production is burdened with debt. Poverty of the many is the inevitable result of the possession of wealth and privilege by the few.

Crime is discussed as a symptom of general social disorganization. Racial exploitation is shown as economic, not racial, in its roots, while fascism is exposed as bringing forward a racial theory of white superiority to justify class domination. Wars are shown to be the wars of possessors, whose aggressions are not racial but economic.

In the second part of the book, Miss van Kleeck outlines "the promise in new creative forces" of providing dynamic security for the American people. A chapter on the people in politics points to the definite promise in proposals for a Farmer-Labor Party and presents new, valuable material on Father Coughlin in a comparison between his program and the 1930 Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XI. A discussion of social work concludes that the efforts of social workers help to clarify thought about the standards which ought to prevail in a new social order.

Miss van Kleeck concludes her book with a discussion of workers' action, industrial unionism, and the need for political action by the labor movement in alliance with farmers. To professionals and the middle-class individuals who are potential allies of the working class, she appeals for a new relationship:

"The times demand of the individual, whether he is within or without the ranks of the workers, the will to become one with them in preparing the masses for the present phase of the struggle to free America's creative forces from the bondage of possessive privilege."

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